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BOB ROLLICK, THE YANKEE NOTION DRUMMER.

A Sequel to "Bob Rollick; or, What Was He Born For?"

BY PETER PAD.



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BOB ROLLICK,

THE YANKEE NOTION DRUMMER.

A Sequel to "Bob Rollick; or, What Was He Born For?"

By PETER PAD.

Author of "The Shortys Married and Settled Down," "Ebenezer Crow," "Stump; or, Little, but Oh, My!" "Chips and Chin Chin," "Tom Dick, and the ———," "Tumbling Tim," "Tommy Bounce," "Tommy Bounce at College," "Shorty; or, Kicked into Good Luck," "Tommy Dodd," "Shorty in Search of His Dad," "The Shortys Trip Around the World," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

BOYS, you all remember Bob Rollick, don't you? I thought so.

Handsome, bright, brave, mischievous Bob Rollick. Who ever knew him that did not remember him?

You remember how he got sent to Professor Backstrap's school, at College Point, and the pranks he cut up there.

What larks he and his chums had at that boarding-school!

But he raised the mischief once too often there, and got "fired out," which, of course, you also remember, although the good, rich, old maid, who had taken such a fancy to him, on account of his bravery in stopping her runaway horse and probably saving her life, refused to believe what was said against him.

She put him into another school, out of which he was also bounced for mischief and playing tricks before he had been there a year.

Then the old girl sort of tumbled, and came to the conclusion that Bob would do better at some business than he seemed inclined to do at attending school, and so she got him a position in a large Yankee notions store, where he was employed as a clerk.

Well, this was something of a change for our friend Bob, wasn't it?

But for all that, he felt better where he could earn his own living and make his own way than he did to live upon the generosity of Miss Gnarly, although she did not forsake him by any means, but helped him in various ways, knowing that he was getting only small pay.

Bob, however, soon began to like his new life, and to make it still more enjoyable, there were three or four young fellows employed by the firm very near his own age, and very like him in disposition.

This, of course, made it pleasant for everybody but the bosses and older salesmen, for Bob had not been there a month before he was cutting up his sly pranks, and the young fellows declared him to be a perfect brick.

These young clerks were Joe Buck, Bill Dangle, George Slash, and Dick Dimple, and you may as well be introduced to them now as at any other time, seeing that they will probably figure in the coming story somewhat.

And there was Larry McShiner, the Irish porter, in the employ of Slope, Slimmer & Co., who was so Irish that they wouldn't let him live in Ireland, and you might as well know him, too.

The large wholesale house of Slope, Slimmer & Co. was situated on Broadway, N. Y., and they did a very extensive business in Yankee notions.

Do you know what is meant by Yankee notions? Well, a little of everything that you can think of in lighter goods, and knick-knacks is quite as good a definition as I can think of.

And besides the large number of clerks and salesmen employed by the firm, they also had several drummers to go about the country with samples of their goods, soliciting orders, and to drum up trade.

It will be remembered that Bob Rollick had always wanted to be a drummer, and now he was determined to apply for one of the positions just as soon as he learned the business.

But that same spirit of mischief which was born in him kept him from learning the business, as it had kept him from learning at school, and his employers soon found out that they had got not only a very smart young fellow, but a mischievous one as well.

Larry McShiner was Bob's especial delight, and he kept him continually in hot water.

"Bad manners to him!" he would growl, "ther divil

war a reigun' the day he come ter this store, so he war."

One day Larry and Bob were at work together in the basement. The boss had set them to taking a lot of valuable vases from shelves and removing them up-stairs.

Bob got on a step-ladder to hand them down into a large basket which Larry was holding up for the purpose. This was a nice arrangement for Bob, but as the vases were quite heavy, and he piled the basket full, it was no fun for Larry.

"Hould yer hould!" cried the porter, staggering under the weight of the load.

"What's the matter with you?" asked Bob.

"Ye'll break me arms."

"Well, go ahead then," and Larry started up-stairs with his load.

Bob laughed at his discomfiture, and made up his mind to give him a greater dose next time, so when Larry turned for another load he was ready for him.

"I'll tell you how to do it, Larry. Get up on that stool and rest the basket on the top of your head."

"Wud that be betther?"

"To be sure it would. Try it."

All unsuspecting, Larry did as directed, never thinking that a joke was to be played on him, or that he was getting himself into a trap.

Bob piled the basket full of the vases, while Larry steadied it with his two big hands.

"Soy, haven't ye it full?" he asked.

"No, not half full."

"Begorra, but it's breakin' me head, so it is."

"Nonsense," replied Bob, heaping on more.

"Be alsy, will yer."

"Easy! I'm easy enough."

"Hould yer hould! It's breakin' me head ye are!" he bawled.

"Well, get down, then."

Larry attempted to obey, while growling, but he found he could not do so without letting go of the basket and breaking a few hundred dollars worth of vases, which he would have to pay for.

"Why don't you get down?" asked Bob.

"I can't."

"Why not?"

"Sure an' I can't. I'll drop me load."

"Well, drop it then; it will get down to the floor as soon as you do."

The numskull was almost on the point of letting go of it before he thought, but he held on though.

"Fut'll I do?" he moaned.

"Get down. You don't expect to stand here all day, do you?"

"Sure I can't get down, an' the load's breakin' me head; it'll drive me neck inter me body."

"All right; let it drive; I don't care," said Bob, calmly taking a seat on the top step of the ladder.

"Take it off!"

"Not much; but you'd better get down before the boss comes."

"But I can't," persisted Larry, down whose ugly mug the sweat was pouring in big drops.

"All right, it's your business, not mine," replied Bob, coolly getting down and walking away with a couple of the vases, leaving the entrapped porter standing where he was.

"Murther! Will ye lave me?"

"Of course I will. I've done my part of the business, now you do yours," and away he went up-stairs, where he posted the other young clerks about what he had done.

"Help! help! I'll be murdered entoirely," roared Larry, and this set the young fellows laughing up-stairs. "Come, somebody, or I'll drop me load!"

He kept yelling for assistance, and finally the boss went to find out what the matter was, and by this time the poor victim was ready to drop from exhaustion.

"What in thunder is the matter with you? What are you doing up there?" demanded he.

"I'm up here, sor."

"So I see; but what are you doing there with that basket on your head?"

"I can't get down, sor."

"Why not?"

"For fear I'd fall, sor."

"Are you crazy?"

"No; but soon will be, if I don't get down. Can't yer help me, sor?" he asked, in piteous tones.

"What have you in the basket?"

"Vases that ye tould us to take up-stairs, sor."

"Well, how came you loaded so that you cannot get down?"

"Bob Rollick did it, sor."

"Oh, he *did*, eh?" asked the boss, going up the step-ladder and assisting him with the basket.

"Bad luck ter that spalpeen; it's nearly dead I am," moaned Larry, when he got down.

"Well, see that you don't let him get you into another scrape. He has made a fool of you often enough, I should think."

"Ther divil fly away wid him," he muttered, as he proceeded to take the basket up-stairs.

"Bob, what did you play that trick on Larry for?" asked the boss, on meeting the joker.

"What trick?" asked Bob, looking at him innocently, and with well-assumed surprise.

"Why, getting him up on that stool with a load of vases on his head."

"Oh, I only loaded his basket and left him to bring them up while I brought up a load myself."

"Too thin, young fellow! You just let him alone in the future."

"Did he say I played it on him?"

"Of course he did."

"May I give him one on the nose for lying?" asked Bob, quickly.

"No."

"And you are willing to take his word against mine?"

"Oh, I know you pretty well by this time, and also know that there is more mischief going on since you came here than there ever was before. Now I want you to stop it, or you will be discharged. Don't let that slip out of your mind," said the boss, severely.

But Bob wasn't the kind of a cat to tumble and let up when he had a good subject for fun, and so he kept up his rackets on Larry whenever he had a chance to work one on him, only more on the quiet, perhaps.

Things went on in this way for several months, Bob all the while making himself a greater favorite, not only with his fellow-clerks, but with his employers.

And finally there was a vacancy in the list of drummers, and they fitted him out with several trunks of samples of their goods and started him out on the road as a full-fledged drummer.

They gave him what they termed the Eastern route, that is, the Eastern States, and his last instructions were never to go to a country trader and leave without selling something, even though they assured him in the most positive terms that they did not want anything.

But Bob hardly needed to be instructed in this particular, for he possessed the necessary amount of cheek for a drummer, and had often listened to the exploits of other drummers since he had been in the em-

ploy of the house, and consequently he was pretty well posted beforehand.

His first stopping-place was Bridgeport, Connecticut, and here it was that he took his first step in drumming.

Taking a large sample-case with him, he went to a country store and, of course, asked to see the proprietor.

"That's me, young man," said the only person in the store, and with a nasal twang that showed him to be truly Yankee.

"Ah! then you are the very man I am looking for. In fact, you are the man I have come all the way from New York to see," said Bob, briskly.

"Is that so?" asked the merchant, looking at him with wide-open eyes.

"Right you are, my dear sir. I represent the house of Slope, Slimmer & Co., and I have called to see if I cannot sell you a bill of goods."

"Oh, you're a drummer, are you?"

"A commercial traveler, sir, vulgarly called a drummer."

"Well, you don't often see a chap of your age possessed of nerve and cheek enough for the business," said the old man, smiling.

"Oh, sir, it requires neither nerve nor cheek to sell our goods, for they have only to be seen to sell themselves. Now allow me to—"

"Not any. I have more of your trash than I can sell now."

"Ah, my dear sir," said Bob, coaxingly.

"Not a thing, young fellow."

"But just allow me to show you a few samples."

"No, sir, it will do no good. I have already more goods than I can sell."

"Allow me to astonish you."

"Well, you will, if you are smart enough to sell me anything to-day."

"Oh, for that matter, I will stay over until to-morrow, and give you a chance to think and make up your mind. There's nothing mean about the house of Slope, Slimmer & Co. In fact, they send out their representatives to astonish out-of-town merchants with their prices. Now, in the matter of stationery—"

"I tell you that I don't want anything you have got. So you may as well save your breath to cool your porridge."

"Oh, I've got lots of breath, and, besides, I don't eat porridge. Now—"

"It's well you don't, or anything else, if you have to earn it selling goods to me. I tell you I have more goods, of every description, than I can sell."

"Exactly; that is because you have paid too high for your goods, and I come to you now as a friend, to enable you to sell goods cheaper and at the same time make more money than any other trader in town."

"I tell you I don't want anything you have got, either for love or money, and you may as well go," he replied, decidedly.

"But just let me show you some—"

"Not a thing, I tell you."

Just then a little girl entered the store.

"Mother wants a paper of needles," said she, and the store-keeper went in search of them.

This wasn't making a very good beginning, but Bob was not inclined to give up beaten, so he walked leisurely about the store while the man was attending to his customer, and took a look at his stock.

Presently they were alone again, much to the annoyance of the trader.

"I see you are nearly out of fine-toothed combs," said Bob, coming up again serenely.

"I've got more of them than I shall sell for the next year."

"How about pins and needles?"

"Got all I want."

"How about toys?"

"No sale for them."

"We've got all the latest novelties."

"So have I."

"How about toilet articles?"

"Never have any call for them."

"But of course you would have if you had a line of them."

"No, sir; I wouldn't be bothered with them, and I don't wish to be bothered with you, either," said he, turning away, as the store door opened and the same little girl entered again.

"Mother says these needles aren't no good. She wants English ones," said she, smartly.

"I haven't any English needles."

"Well, then, she says give me back the money, an' I'll go up ter Mr. Brown's an' get 'em."

With a look of disgust, the trader handed back the money, which the girl took and left, stealing a handful of nuts as she went out.

"There you are, my dear sir," said Bob, the moment they were alone again.

"What do you mean—where am I?" he asked, savagely.

"I have some elegant English needles."

"Well, keep them."

"But you want to keep them for sale."

"How do you know I do? Who is running this business, you or I?"

"Oh, of course you are, but you don't want Brown to get your trade away simply because he keeps a better article than you do."

"How do you know I don't? How do you know but that I want to help Brown along? How do you know but that Brown is my son-in-law, or something? And what business is it of yours, anyway?" he demanded, savagely.

"None in the least, my dear sir. But I meant no offense."

"Yes, you did; you came in here just to insult me, and I wouldn't wonder if you are a friend of Brown's."

"My dear sir, I never saw Brown in my life that I know of."

"Well, go and see him, then."

"But, my dear sir, I was instructed to call on you first and give you the benefit of our new notions and low prices."

"Bah! You'd sell to Brown just as quick as you would to me."

"No, sir, we wish if possible to have our goods for sale at a first-class store, and in only one store in each town. Now," he added, after giving him this taste of taffy, "let me take your order for a few gross of English needles."

"No, sir."

"Have you seen the latest variety of soap?"

"Confound soaps; confound your whole line of goods; I don't want anything you have."

"I am told that there is quite a call for the new style of pearl buttons here."

"Never had a call in my life."

"But if you only had a good assortment, you certainly would have calls."

"What do you know about it?"

"I know they are all the rage in New York, and that they would undoubtedly sell here."

"What do you know about Bridgeport people? Because women are fools in New York, is it any sign that they are here?"

"Well, I am told that women are very much alike the world over."

"It's a lie. I don't want any buttons. I don't want anything you have got. Have I not told you so before?"

"That's because you haven't seen my goods."

"And I don't want to," said the merchant, turning to wait upon a lady customer.

"Have you any violet ink?" she asked.

"No, m'm. I have the black and blue."

"Oh, I want violet," and she flaunted out of the store.

"Ah!" said Bob, taking out his order book, "let me take your order for a few gross of violet ink, highly perfumed. By the way, how are you on perfumes?" he added, cheerfully.

"Young man, has it dawned upon you yet that you are a confounded bore?"

"No, sir, I think not."

"Has it yet dawned upon you that I do not wish to buy anything?"

"Well, it seems to me that you have insinuated as much, but you see you were quite mistaken, for since I have been here you have had calls for two articles which you do not have. Of course everybody is liable to make mistakes. How would you like to look at some fine cutlery?"

"I'd like to look at some knives, if they can stand the test," said the man, after looking at him for a moment without speaking.

"What test?" asked Bob.

"If you have got a knife capable of cutting that cheek of yours, I'll buy a few gross," replied the man.

"Oh, you are joking now."

"Not a bit of it. I thought when I first saw you that you didn't possess cheek enough for a drummer, but I now find that I was mistaken. You have enough for an undertaker or an auctioneer," said he, but without making Bob blush.

"Oh, no, my dear sir! I simply represent the house of Slope, Slimmer & Co."

"Well, if they deal in cheek you are a first-class representative."

"Thank you, sir; but can't I sell you some thread?"

"No, sir."

"Well, you are the first man I ever attempted to sell anything to, and I don't like to have it to say that I failed."

"But you can bet your young life that you *will* have it to say, and I don't wish you to bother me any more."

"But if you had some of our goods it would be impossible for me or anybody else to bother you, you would be so busy with customers. Now think if there isn't something I can sell—"

"Young man, if you don't get out of my store, I will kick you out."

"Oh, you wouldn't do that. Only think how it would look," said Bob, calmly.

"Only think how it would *feel*."

"Business before pleasure. I can sell you some sewing silk so cheap that it will make a cold chill run down your back."

"I'll bet you five dollars you can't."

"And some shelf ornaments that have only been imported this year for the first time. And I notice that you are nearly out of sapolite; let me put you down for a few gross. And I am sure that you want some sewing-machine needles—say ten gross," he added, writing the order in his book, while the merchant stood looking at him in utter amazement. "Now, how are you fixed on shoe lacings? We have the finest and cheapest lot in the market, and in the line of vases—let me show you."

"Young Master Cheeky, allow me to show *you*," said the man; and going for Bob, he rushed him, samples and all, out of the door, and then gave him a lift on the toe of his big boot that sent him flying.

The air was full of samples, and they landed on the sidewalk about the same time that Bob did.

"There, confound you; see if you will keep out of my store in future," shouted the merchant, shaking his fist at him.

Bob slowly rose from the ground and looked back at him.

"Old man, my name's Bob Rollek, and I generally get even with people. Good-bye; I'll see you later," said he, gathering up his samples that lay strewn around.

"All right; but whenever you want to get kicked out, come and see me."

"Oh, I'll come and see you again, never fear," said Bob, and he probably would have said more had not the merchant slammed the door shut.

Bob felt sore in several ways, and he also felt mad for several reasons, not the slightest of which was that he had not only failed to sell a bill of goods, but had been kicked out of the first store he had visited.

"Old man, I'll get hunk with you if it takes me the remainder of my life," said he, picking up his sample trunk and shaking his fist at the store.

Just as Bob picked himself up, and while he was shaking his fist at the storekeeper who had kicked him out, a policeman came along.

"What's the matter, young fellow?" he asked, having seen him gathering up his samples.

"Oh, nothing, only there was an earthquake, and I got bounced a bit," replied Bob, cheerfully.

"What do you mean?"

"Why, I was trying to sell old Smith some goods and he kicked me out, that's all."

"Ah! so you are a drummer, eh?"

"That's what's the matter."

"I saw you come flying out of the door, and my first impression was that there had been an explosion in the store."

"Well, I guess there *was*."

"Did you get hurt?"

"Not much."

"Probably landed on your *cheek*?" said the officer, laughing.

"Well, yes, but I'll get square on the old fraud," replied Bob, limping away.

"I hope you will, for he's the meanest old cuss in Bridgeport."

"I'll fix him, see if I don't."

"I hope you will, but I'm afraid you won't," said the officer, walking beside him.

"Why not?"

"Because no man was ever yet known to get even with him."

"How about him anyway?" asked Bob, after a moment's silence.

"How about him how?"

"Well, what do you know about him?"

"Well, he's a bloody old blister; cheats everybody he has anything to do with; is worth a pile of money; is all self, and wouldn't do anything to the extent of a copper for anybody but himself and wife."

"Got any children?"

"No—too mean to have any."

"All Smith and wife, eh?"

"You bet."

"Nobody ever got the best of him, eh?"

"Not as heard of."

"All right; we'll see about that."

"Well, good-bye, young fellow. I hope you'll get hunk with the old duffer, but I'm afraid you'll be considerably older before you do—ha! ha! ha!" and at the next corner of the street they parted.

"I'm a knocked out drummer! I'm a kicked individual; I'm a crushed American citizen," mused Bob, as he walked towards his hotel. "And now the question is, how shall this knocked-out drummer, this kicked individual, get even with this unappreciative old rooster? I wouldn't have this thing known at the store for all the money I ever expect to be worth. How they would laugh and kid me! No, no; I must never give it up so. Well, I will try it on some of the other traders, and if I do not meet with better luck, why I will give it up and say that I was never born for a drummer."

Slowly and somewhat sadly he pulled himself together and worked up his dilapidated cheek to try the business again. But, quite contrary to the luck he had at first, he managed to sell a good bill of goods at two other stores before the day was over, and, of course, this put him in good humor with himself.

That evening, after his day's work was done, he took a stroll out and around to see Bridgeport by gas-light, knowing that as a manufacturing place, he would be likely to see more of it than during the day.

And a right lively place he soon found it to be. In fact, it seemed to be a little piece of New York, and he was pleased.

He made the acquaintance of several persons at the hotel, and among them was a native from Bridgeport who knew old Tom Smith from top to bottom.

From him he learned that the mean old rooster was going to have a silver wedding in a few days, and that he had sent notice of it to all of his friends, not caring so much for their coming or their friendly congratulations as he did for the presents he hoped they would send.

Bob took a quiet tumble.

"I think Mrs. Tom Smith would be glad to receive a present from me, and a present she shall have—a big one," he mused, after he had retired for the night.

And before he went to sleep he had worked out the whole thing, just how he would get square with the man who had kicked him out of the store, just for showing his genius.

The next day he finished Bridgeport, and instead of going on to New Haven as he had originally intended, he started back to New York to report his progress, and with some plausible excuse for doing so.

The young fellows, as well as the firm, congratulated him on the beginning he had made, but to his chums only did he tell his real object in returning to New York before going further on.

The idea pleased them, as most of Bob's ideas always did, and they lent him their assistance in carrying it out.

In the first place they got a large dry goods box and large quantities of paper down in the packing-room, and went to work like beavers.

It took them nearly an hour to complete the packing and nailing of the box, after which Bob took the marking-brush and wrote the address in large letters:

THOMAS SMITH, Esq.,
BRIDGEPORT, CONN.
ADAMS' EXPRESS,
C. O. D., \$50.00.

(Fragile; handle with care.)

When all was finished and ready, one of the firm's wagons took the box to the office of Adams Express Company, and those in the secret had a good laugh over the matter afterward.

Indeed, Joe Buck resolved to return to Bridgeport,

the express company more careful. Yes—yes; I understand it all now."

"Going to open it?" asked one of the bystanders.

"Of course I am," he replied, only too glad that so large a number of people were present to see the rare presents that his friends in New York had sent him.

Then he began to whistle most amiably as he proceeded to get his mallet and chisel for the purpose of prying off the cover.

The spectators swapped winks with each other as his nibs proceeded with his work, all the while whistling triumphantly.

"There's a good many people in 'this town that think Tom Smith's got no friends," said he, as he pried off the last piece of the cover.

They gathered around and saw that the box con-

look at the package and to wipe the perspiration from his mug.

"Most shell for a little meat ever I seen," one old Yank ventured to say.

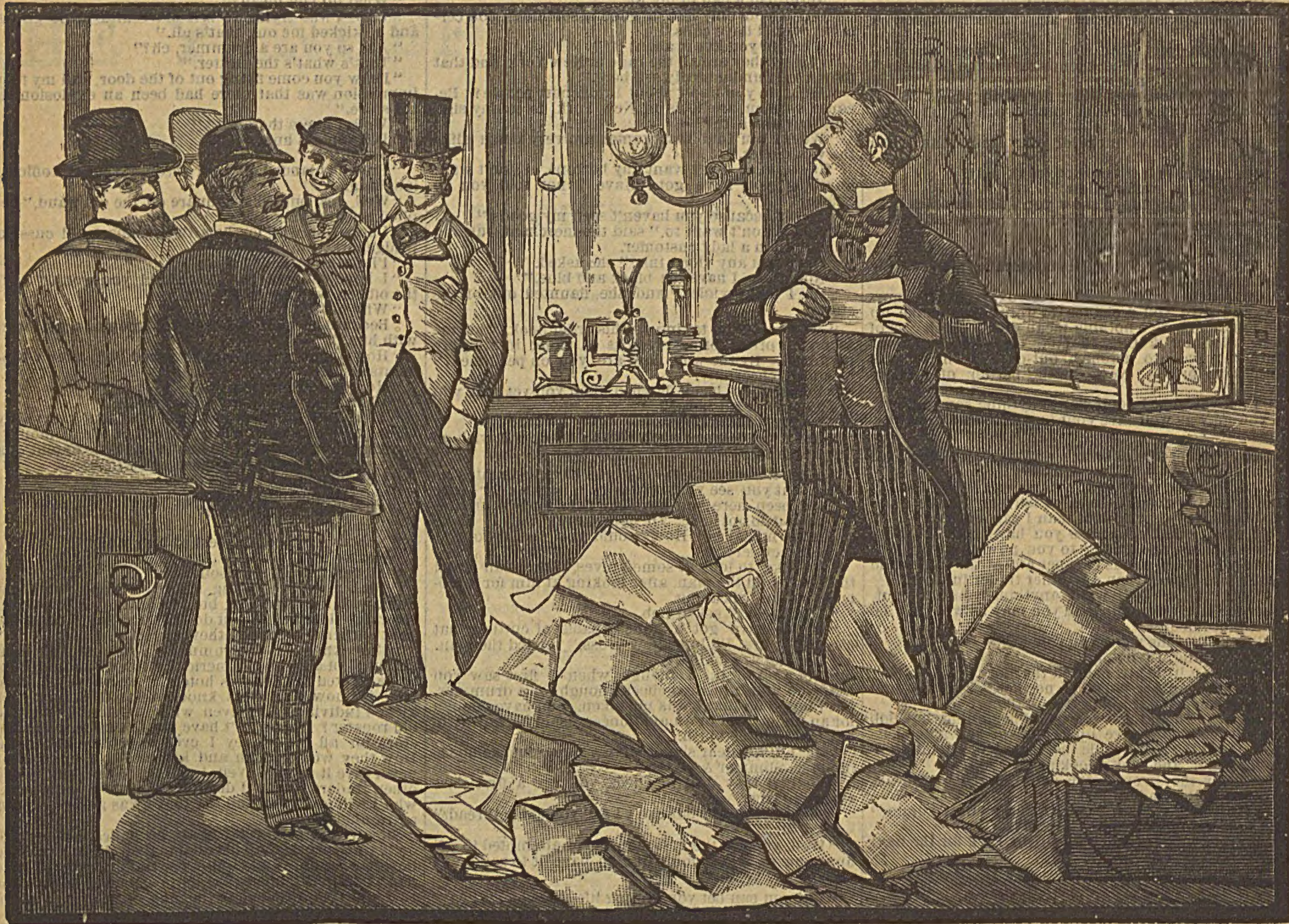
"Never saw anything like it," said another.

"Maybe it's glass an' they thought as how it might get broken," said a third.

"Oh, it must be something valuable," was Joe Bucks' suggestion.

"Of course," replied Smith. "But what on earth did they wrap it up so thickly for? It beats all creation," he added.

And then he picked up the third smaller bundle and placed it upon his counter, while the others kicked away the piles of wrapping paper or trampled upon it in order to get nearer to the scene of operations.



"Get out of here, all of you! I believe you are all in the conspiracy!" he yelled. "How about that silver wedding, Smith?" asked another, while the others laughed. "Go to thunder and blazes, all of you, or I will call a policeman!"

and see how the thing turned out, and this of course pleased him mightily.

So the next day they took the boat from New York, and had a rousing good time all the way, Bob playing several tricks on the passengers, and making his usual amount of fun at the expense of some one else.

The box had gone by rail, and arrived at its destination about the same time that they did, but before it was delivered at Smith's store Bob had a chance to gather a few of the old fellow's enemies and told them to go to the store and hang around to see the sport.

Joe Buck also ventured to go in on some pretense or other, and to watch the opening of the box, provided the old fellow didn't tumble.

"Fifty dollars!" exclaimed Smith, as the express messenger tumbled the box into the store. "Where does it come from?"

"New York."

"But who from?"

"That I cannot tell. The way-bill simply says, 'From friends'—don't you know?"

"No, hanged if I do," he mused, looking at the directions carefully, reading them aloud, while the posted ones gathered around.

As for Bob Rollick, he remained on the opposite side of the street, out of sight.

"Ah! 'Fragile—handle with care.' Now I guess I know what it means," mused Smith, as he pulled out a big, fat wallet and paid the fifty dollars, and two dollars freight charges.

The messenger signed the receipt and left the store, for he, of course, knew nothing about what the box contained.

"Ahem!" said Smith, taking a proud look at the box. "I guess I know where this box comes from. To-morrow I have a silver-wedding, and this box undoubtedly contains some very valuable presents; and they put the fifty-dollar charge upon it just to make

tained a huge roll of something that was strongly tied up with cords as though it contained something very valuable.

Smith asked one of the bystanders to help him lift it out of the box, and Joe Buck at once volunteered to assist. It was not very heavy, but Joe made believe that it was, and grunted considerably as he helped land it upon the floor.

"Now, then, we shall see what we shall see," said Smith, taking out his pocket-knife and cutting the cord in several places.

With considerable caution he unwrapped about twenty layers of heavy paper, which greatly diminished the size of the bundle, when he came upon still another bundle, tied up stoutly, and very much like the first one, the shells of which strewed the floor.

"Well, I must say that they took pains enough to wrap it up, whatever it is," said Smith, gazing at the next bundle.

"Must be something very valuable," suggested Joe Buck.

"No doubt about it," said several of the others.

"And some people are so careful and particular in doing up anything valuable," suggested Smith, as he cut the cords of the bundle, expecting to get at the meat of the coconut this time for sure.

"What on earth can it be, I wonder?"

"Some fancy silver-ware, I dare say."

"Oh, we shall soon see," said Smith, as he commenced to unwrap again.

At this point there were more winks exchanged among the by-standers.

Fold after fold of wrapping paper did he take off—indeed, almost as much as he had taken from the first package which encased this one, when finally he came upon another package, not more than a foot in diameter.

"Well, I'll be hanged!" exclaimed Smith, pausing to

"Well, I should say that you had got to it now, Mr. Smith," suggested an acquaintance.

"I should say so, too. Hang me if ever I saw the beat of this. Look at the paper I have taken off," said Smith, glancing around.

"Must have cost 'em something to do it up," suggested a neighbor.

"Paper was plenty where that came from," suggested Joe Buck.

"Guess that's so. Well, let's go for it again," said Smith, again cutting the strings of what they all believed to be the final package.

But layer after layer of paper did he unwind from this one; indeed, it seemed that there was no end of it. What on earth did it mean?

Smith paused and drew a long breath as he came to the fourth package, now not much larger than a brick.

But this was even more securely done up than any of the others had been. The cords which bound it were covered with sealing wax where they joined or were knotted, and if there was anything in the package at all it must be inside of that.

"Gracious me, it can't be very large."

"But precious goods are done up in small packages," said Smith, as he proceeded to cut the string.

Layer after layer of paper was taken from this, until finally a small cigar box, about an inch deep, by six inches long and four inches wide, was brought to view.

"Ah!" exclaimed Smith. "Now, then, we have got to the meat of the nut," and unable to bear the suspense any longer, he opened the box with the blade of his knife.

Only a piece of paper greeted his eyes!

"What is it—a check?" they all asked.

Smith held up the slip of paper, while a pallor stole over his face, and read:

"TOM SMITH TO BOB ROLLICK, DR.,
"For kicking him out of your store.....\$50.00.
"Received payment,
"BOB ROLLICK."

The old man fell back upon the head of a barrel, completely broken up.

CHAPTER II.

If ever there was a broken-up individual in this world, it was the Bridgeport trader, Tom Smith, who had kicked Bob Rollick out of his store, because as a drummer he had worked so hard to sell him a bill of goods.

Those who had gathered at his store to see the joke

as he stood there knee-deep in the wrapping paper that he had peeled from the huge bundle, only to find Bob Rollick's receipt for fifty dollars, for kicking him out of his store a short time before!

"The rascal!" he muttered. "Now I remember that he said: 'My name's Bob Rollick, and I always get hunk.' Confound him! I think he has got hunk with me. But I'll not stand it; I'll consult a lawyer at once, and see if I can't have the fellow arrested for swindling or obtaining money under false pretenses," saying which he gathered up the cart load of wrapping paper, and crammed it angrily back into the box, and then locking his store started to the office of his lawyer.

To him he stated the case, and asked what he had better do about it.

sustained, I shall only charge you ten dollars for my advice in the matter," he added.

"Ten dollars?"

"Yes, sir."

"Ten dollars for a little talk?"

"Certainly. Talk in our profession is not cheap, if it is in others. And, by the bye," he added, opening his account-book, "that makes just one hundred dollars you owe me, and as the account has been standing for a long time, and I am greatly in need of the money, I wish you would be good enough to pay me now."

It nearly took Smith's breath away, and for a moment he could not speak.

With the utmost coolness and deliberation the lawyer proceeded to make out his bill and hand it to him.



"You are a nuisance, sir, and you must get out of this car." "Well, you just try to put me out." "So I will, you pig carrier!" and the indignant passenger attempted to lay hands on him. Something tumbled over just then, but it wasn't the man with the box.

worked out now laughed and roared so loud that it attracted the attention of passers-by, and none laughed louder than did Joe Buck, Bob's friend, who had gone to Bridgeport especially to see the racket.

Bob heard the laughter from his place of concealment on the opposite side of the street, and knew that his game had worked. That was enough for him, and so he walked away.

"Well, I'll be hanged," moaned Smith, "that young fellow ought to be put in prison, and if ever I get my eyes on him I'll have him arrested."

"Serves you just right," said one of those who had gathered to see the sport, and who hated him as bad as anybody did.

"Of course it does," said another.

"Three cheers for Bob Rollick!" shouted Joe Buck, and those cheers were instantly given.

"What is this? How dare you? Who are you, anyway?" demanded Smith, glaring at Joe.

"I'm a friend of Bob Rollick."

"I thought so. Confound you, get out of my store, or I will kick you out," said he, making a rush for Joe.

"Better look out, old man, or you may have to pay fifty dollars for kicking another fellow," suggested one of the by-standers as Joe stepped out of the store, and went to join Bob Rollick.

"Get out of here, all of you! I believe you are all in the conspiracy!" he yelled.

"How about that silver wedding, Smith?" asked another, while the others laughed.

"Go to thunder and blazes, all of you, or I will call a policeman!"

"Better call a cart to take home your present," and amid much laughter they all stepped out of the store and in less than an hour the story, as being known and laughed at all over the town of Bridgeport.

But, oh! what a sick old rooster that Tom Smith was

"Well," said the lawyer, as a smile stole over his face, "I think you had better say nothing at all about it."

"What? Why not?"

"It was certainly cheap enough."

"What was?"

"The bill for kicking the young man out of your store."

"Why, confound it, don't I tell you that he bothered the life out of me?"

"Yes, but you should have called an officer and had the kicking done according to law."

"And can't I bring an action against him?" asked Smith, eagerly.

"To be sure you can."

"Ah, now you are talking!"

"Yes, you can have him arrested and tried for some sort of a misdemeanor—provided you are anxious to make yourself ridiculous in the eyes of everybody and become a laughing stock."

Smith opened his eyes, but kept his mouth shut. He didn't appear to have anything to say just then, and the lawyer proceeded:

"Have him arrested and tried and you will bring the whole business up before the world. The papers will seize it, and you will be laughed at by everybody, while the young drummer would get patted on the back and pronounced a good fellow."

"But can't I have him locked up?"

"I doubt it very much. You were the aggressor, and the joke he played on you was so good that a magistrate's decision would in all probability be in harmony with public opinion—served you right."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Smith.

"Therefore my advice to you is that you pocket the loss—call it so much for a lesson—and say no more about it. And in consideration of the loss already

"But, I say, Mr. Spider, you don't insist upon my paying you this bill now, do you?"

"I do, indeed. I have sent it to you several times, but you have taken no notice of it, and you never come to see me unless you wish advice or work, which only makes it larger. So I think the best way is to pay it now. There it is."

"But this last charge."

"It is reasonable."

With a face that looked as though he had swallowed a quart of vinegar, Smith once more pulled out his old wallet and paid the bill most grudgingly, and then, without another word (for fear he would get an answer and have to pay for it), he left the office, as sick a man as was ever seen.

But by this time the joke had become known to hundreds, and when he emerged upon the street, he was greeted by a shout of laughter and many tender inquiries regarding his "present."

"Woke up the wrong passenger that time, didn't you, old man?" asked some one.

"Oh, go to thunder!" growled Smith, hurrying away to his store.

In a very short time Bob Rollick was the hero of the hour in Bridgeport, and the expensive joke that he played on old Tom Smith, the most unpopular man in the town, became known all over and was laughed at by everybody.

The Bridgeport Sentinel reporter got hold of the matter and worked it up for all it was worth, giving a good pen-and-ink portrait of Bob, and a jovial account of the whole affair, which, of course, was read far and wide and copied into many other papers.

And this gave Bob a send-off that was worth much to him, for the moment he struck a place after that he was known at once and generally given a hearty welcome.

At all events, he was in no danger of being kicked

out again by anybody who did not feel like buying a bill of goods of him.

He was the center of attraction at the hotel that night, and the next day he parted with his friend Joe Buck, he going to New Haven, and Joe returning to New York to impart the particulars of the racket to his fellow clerks.

"That fellow will work his way, never fear," said Mr. Slope, the head of the firm of Slope, Slimmer & Co., for whom Bob worked, after he and his partners had enjoyed a hearty laugh over the affair.

"And the publication of the hurrah is very good advertising for us, too," added Mr. Slimmer.

"I always knew he was a smart boy, and between us all, I wouldn't be a bit surprised if the rich Miss Gnarley left him all her money," said another member of the firm.

"Well, it's my opinion she would rather bring him up and marry him," said Mr. Slope, laughing, for they all knew the romantic old maid and the tender interest she had in Bob Rollick, who, when only a poor boot-black, had stopped her runaway horse and, perhaps, saved her life.

"Well, she's a good friend to have at all events, for I guess the old girl is worth at least half a million, and has no heirs to leave it to. Hang me, if I wouldn't marry her myself," said Mr. Slimmer, earnestly.

"I don't blame her for liking the handsome fellow, for I like him myself, only he is so full of the Old Scratch that you don't know where you may find him. I was talking with Professor Backstrap, who has the boarding-school at College Point, and he says he is as smart as lighting, only there was some devilry on foot continually from the time he entered his school until he left it."

"Oh, well, he will tone down after awhile. I know I used to be given a trifle that way myself when I was a youngster," said Mr. Slope, with considerable pride, considering his age.

And so they talked and laughed over the matter for some time, each one speaking a good word for Bob, and only faintly condemning the spirit of mischief that was born in him.

It will be remembered that Bob was a waif when he was first introduced to the reader, and even now he knew no more of his parents than the man in the moon. The boys in the street had given him the name of "Bob Rollick," and he still retained it, not caring for any other.

But Miss Gnarly, his kind benefactor, with a woman's curiosity, had never ceased trying to find out something about him, although up to this time she had learned nothing that was in any way reliable.

But let us return to Bob Rollick.

From Bridgeport he went to New Haven, where his fame had preceded him, since the Bridgeport racket had been republished in the *New Haven Register*, and wherever he went the merchants recognized and welcomed him.

The consequence was that he sent back to New York a good lot of orders, which made the firm believe that he was destined to become their boss drummer.

Naturally enough, he made the acquaintance of several young fellows with whom he came in contact, and his second night in New Haven was a lively one.

His friends took him out to show him the sights, and there were several sights to be seen, even in the staid old town of New Haven.

During the first part of the evening, they met several students of Yale College out on quiet or rousing larks, and it was the most natural thing in the world that they should come together.

And it was also but natural that Bob should take kindly to such fellows, as every reader knows who is acquainted with him, and they will take it for granted without my telling so, that he kept his end up without trouble; although the larks indulged in by these students were somewhat rougher than those indulged in at Professor Backstrap's school when he was there.

They visited several resorts where they were well known, and sang songs, told stories, and raised a loud old ruction generally. It was long past midnight when Bob returned to his hotel, fully satisfied with his evening's sport, but half inclined to regret that he had not continued at school so as to have in time reached Yale College, where there existed so much fun.

The next day he took the train and went to Hartford, a pretty inland city, and once more commenced his drumming, and, as before, was at once recognized as the hero of the Bridgeport racket.

But here he met a rival, drumming for another Yankee Notion house, and as he had the advantage of knowing the dealers and could sell at equally low prices, Bob found much difficulty in catching on.

Indeed, he found but one merchant who would look at his samples at all; but after a long talk, he managed to get so near to a trade that the man told him to call again the next day and he would give him an answer.

But when he called, the merchant informed him that the rival drummer had been there and undersold him to such an extent that he had given him the order.

This, although perfectly legitimate, riled Bob very much, and of course he made up his mind to get even with his rival if possible, that being the way with him always.

The rival drummer was stopping at the same hotel, although he had not as yet found out that Bob was in it also, and so our friend made it a point to get acquainted with him that evening. He found him to be a pretty fair sort of a fellow, but dreadfully given to beer.

This little weakness Bob did not hesitate to humor in the least, and before midnight he was not only in a very happy condition, but a very communicative one as well; so of course he told Bob all about his business, and among other things how he had struck old Flat

(the customer that Bob had tried to get) on a big order.

Bob pretended to regard it as a good joke, and offered to take the order back to New York for him, as he was employed near the store for which the bummer drummer was on the road, and, in his then mood, he accepted the proposition, giving him a leaf from his order-book placed in an envelope.

That night before retiring Bob copied this order to a leaf of his own book, and posted it to Slope, Slimmer & Co.; and then up betimes in the morning, he took the train for Springfield, having found out that the rival drummer was going in almost an opposite direction—to Providence, thus putting one in Massachusetts and the other in Rhode Island.

Up to this time the reader knows that it has been a very cold day when Bob Rollick is left out; it was quite warm at this time.

He chuckled as he rode away, and wondered what his rival would say when he learned that he had given himself away to a fellow in the same business.

Springfield, Massachusetts, is one of the smartest, liveliest, brightest, go-ahead inland cities in the United States, and of course I may as well add, in the world.

Bob landed there about ten o'clock in the forenoon, an utter stranger to everybody and everything. The hackmen went for him, as they go for everybody, but one of the baggage-masters quietly directed him across the way to the Massolt House, where he could make his headquarters and have a soft thing generally.

A couple of sharps spotted him, and at once took him for a peddler of some sort, most likely a fresh young fellow with a lot of jewelry, which they proposed to get a hold of.

So they resolved to play the bunco game on him at the first opportunity.

Of course you know what the bunco game is. If you don't I'll show you in this, only you will understand of course that Bob Rollick was perfectly "fly" and not a sucker, as he should be in order to have the thing work out all right—for the "steerers."

It is quite a long ride from Hartford to Springfield, and on arriving there Bob went for a bath and a clean up generally before he ventured out to call on the two or three dealers in Yankee Notions whose addresses he had down in his book.

After fixing himself up all right, Bob went down into the bar-room to get a cigar and to quietly take in the situation.

The sharps were on the alert.

One of them approached Bob as he was lighting his cigar, and extended his hand.

"Ah, Charlie, old fellow, how are you? How are the folks in York?" he asked, heartily.

Bob looked him over quietly while finishing the lighting of his cigar.

"That's all hunk, but you don't catch on right," he said, after a moment's pause.

"But you are Charlie Goddard, from New York?"

"Well, not this trip. What's your racket?" asked Bob, calmly.

"Nothing in the world, only I would have sworn that you were my old friend, Charlie Goddard. Of course I beg your pardon, but if that is not your name I would like to know what it is, that I might tell Charlie that there is one other fellow in the world who is the dead image of him," said the fellow, honestly.

Bob tumbled to an old racket right away, although he did not expect to see it being worked in a little quiet Massachusetts town like Springfield.

"Oh," said he, perfectly cool, "I don't mind telling you. My name is Bob Smith. I'm from New York; drummer for diamonds and jewelry."

"Is that so? Well, I never saw two fellows look more alike than you and Charlie Goddard, who, by the bye, is in the same business. Queer, isn't it?"

"Very queer."

"Excuse me, won't you? What will you take?" said the sharp, moving towards the bar.

"Well, I am drinking nothing but wine nowadays."

"All right. Name your brand."

"Pipe, Mr. Barkeeper."

The sharp was evidently taken aback by Bob's cool manner, but he came to the front and paid for the wine which they drank, and soon after he begged to be excused and walked away.

Bob watched him out of sight, and concluded that if he was bunco-steerer he had tumbled, and that he would see no more of him.

But a few moments afterwards, while he was in the reading-room, looking over a New York paper in quest of the news from home, another fellow, the side partner of the first, and to whom he had given the whole tip, approached him.

"Halloo, Bob Smith! how are you?" he asked.

"Ah! you have the advantage of me."

"Why, don't you know one of the old boys when you see him? Why, I met you not six months ago, and in company with Dick Slights, Lou Fenton, and Tom Manson, we had a high old racket. Don't you remember me—Jim Cutter?"

"Well, now, I think I do. How are you?" and Bob, although he saw it all now, extended his hand in the most unsuspecting manner.

"I'm awfully glad to see you, Bob. How long have you been in this quiet old town, and what on earth are you doing here?"

Bob informed him in a few moments, although strictly tumbling to his racket.

"Good! you are just the fellow I wanted to see. What will you have?"

"I'm only drinking wine," said Bob, calmly, and the bar-keeper opened another bottle of the same sort, giving the sharp to understand that he had struck a decidedly high-toned youngster.

But in a game like this the sharp must never weaken, and he did not.

Then he went on to tell him that he had come all the

way from New York to obtain a picture of great value, which he had been informed by letter (which he showed) he had won in a big charitable gift enterprise, and seeing that he had met a friend from New York, would he have any objections to going with him to claim it?

Not the slightest in the world. He had been with any number of friends on just such errands. He was ready right away, so they started, but had gone only a short distance when another man came up and informed Bob's friend that he had paid three hundred dollars to have his picture insured, boxed and shipped to New York.

Could he repay him then?

Certainly, only he was greatly disappointed, because he had a friend from New York to whom he was about to show the beautiful prize.

But there was no help for it, and he at once began to count over a roll of bills, begging Bob's pardon for the detention; but he found that he was just one hundred dollars short, and asked the man to take his watch for the other hundred until he could get back to New York and forward the money. But, of course, the man said he could do nothing of the kind, as he was only an employee, but perhaps his friend would advance it to him.

Bob was appealed to and said, certainly; anything to oblige a friend, and suggested that they go into a lawyer's office and have a little paper drawn up, so that it would be regular in case of accident.

The sharps agreed, not being very well posted in the place themselves; and Bob, hap-hazard, led them into an office of a justice of the peace, although he did not know what it was until his eye caught a little rusty sign on the door.

Three or four men were sitting in the place, and Bob quietly told an old man behind a desk what the proposition was that had been made to him, and, in the most sucker manner in the world, asked him if the thing was legal.

"Young man, you have struck the right shop. We have been looking for these bunco-steerers for several days. Secure them!" said the justice, and, in less time than it takes to write it, the swindlers were in the hands of the law.

"What is the meaning of this?" they asked.

"It means that you made a mistake. You do not know your business. I am the dy' boy, Bob Rollick, the Yankee Notion drummer from New York."

"Much obliged, Mr. Rollick, you have rendered us great service," said the justice.

"That's all right. Send the slouches up. Good-bye, gentlemen, I will see your partner and tell him that you picked up a drummer instead of a sucker. Ta, ta! The worst old game of bunco-steering I ever saw in my life! Ta, ta!" and, kissing his hand to them, Bob turned and left them in the hands of the law.

CHAPTER III.

SPEAKING of broken up sharps, Bob Rollick left the worst lot of them in the hands of the law at Springfield, Massachusetts, that ever attempted to work the bunco game on a sucker.

But as yet he had done no drumming, and early the next morning he set out with his samples slung conveniently over his back.

He did not find business very good, but still, by the artful working of his pliable cheek, he managed to get quite a respectable number of orders to send back to New York.

This of course put him in good humor with himself, and his employers in good humor with their youthful drummer.

Besides this, the *Springfield Republican* got hold of the story regarding the bunco-steerers, as the reader knows it, and published it on the day following, at the same time reviewing the old Bridgeport racket and coupling Bob with both as the youthful hero.

That night he remained in his room, deep in the practice of something brand-new.

But, come to think of it, I may as well give this "something new" away now as at any time, for it will have to come out sooner or later, so here goes!

Bob was studying to be a ventriloquist!

Fact. He had always wanted to be one, and as may have been suspected by those who have known him from the start, he had a natural aptitude for it.

But it is a difficult art, and one that no man can become perfect in without instruction, be he ever so smart and have all the aptitude in the world for the business.

Soon after taking a position in the Yankee notion house of Slope, Slimmer & Co., he saw a book advertised by Frank Tousey, a publisher in New York, written by Harry Kennedy, the celebrated ventriloquist, entitled "How to Become a Ventriloquist," and he was not long in sending his little ten cents for the work, resolved to see what he could make out of it.

Of course, he had often seen Harry Kennedy, and listened to his wonderful art, wishing all the while that he could be even a humble imitator of him, not for profit, but for the fun there was in it.

He studied the little book attentively for a long time; but, as hundreds of others had done, he could not work it. He felt certain that there was something in it, but somehow he could not master it.

But he did not get discouraged, as so many do, and give the whole thing up as unattainable. He kept on studying and practicing, until finally he struck the key of the whole business.

It was as simple as A, B, C, and he wondered why he had not found it before.

But once in possession of it, he improved most rapidly. He had the key, and that was all he then required. The art developed very rapidly, so that before he had been on the road a week he found that he

could not only astonish himself, but many simple people with whom he came in contact.

This, then, was what Bob was engaged in practicing whenever he had an opportunity.

From Springfield he took the cars for Worcester, the handsomest inland city in New England, if not in the world.

On the road he continued to practice his ventriloquial art, and in two or three instances managed to have considerable fun while doing so, which, of course, delighted him.

He had mastered the art of throwing his voice, as it is called, and could imitate the squeal of a pig, the crying of a baby, the barking of a dog, the mewing of a cat, together with the mimicking of various kinds of voices—and two or three brogues or dialects, all of which had come to him easily enough when he had once caught the key to Harry Kennedy's "How to Become a Ventriloquist."

For instance, there was a young married couple sitting in the seat in front of Bob, and they were awfully spoony, so much so as to attract the attention of nearly everybody in the car.

Bob spotted them, of course, and after practicing a little while he went for them whenever the train would stop at a station.

She was leaning her head upon his shoulder, looking up so awfully loving into his blushing face, while his arm was around her neck.

"Oh, George, isn't this dreadfully nice?" Bob seemed to make her say, when the train stopped.

Of course the people in the car turned their attention to them, not a whit surprised, but a loud guffaw followed, which aroused the spoonies and made them both blush worse than ever.

What to make of it they did not know. They heard his voice as the others did, but he could not swear out what she actually said it, so when the train started up he said:

"Ducky, be more cautious, for they are laughing at us."

"What for, darling?" she asked, innocently.

"They heard what you said, birdie."

"I—I didn't say anything; I only thought."

"Well, but you must have thought aloud, my precious canary bird."

"No, I did not, ducky. What do you mean?"

"Why, didn't you say, 'Oh, George, isn't this dreadfully nice?'"

"No, ducky, I only thought it."

"Well, you certainly thought it so loud that everybody in the car heard it."

"No, no, I did not, lovey," she protested, at the same time looking around and taking in the broad grins upon the mugs of the passengers.

"You forget, birdie, but don't do so any more, only when the train is moving."

"Oh, George!" she sighed, and again leaned her head upon his willing shoulder.

They spooned for several minutes, during which time he evidently forgot the annoying incident, and finally the train halted at another station and they were still at it.

"Oh, George!"

"Oh, Pinky-winky!" the passengers heard as the noise ceased, and the blushing couple hearing it themselves, sat bolt upright, blushing more deeply red than ever, conscious that all eyes were on them and everybody laughing at them, yet wholly mystified and wholly unable to understand what it all meant anyhow.

The young husband looked around at Bob, as did the wife, but that innocent individual was seemingly asleep, knowing and caring nothing about what was going on.

"Well, that's the sickest couple ever I seen," they heard an old fellow say, and then there was another laugh.

But the train started up just then and further comment was not heard.

At one station soon afterward a man got on with a box and took a seat on the opposite side of the car. What was in that box no one but the owner knew, of course, but after the train had started the passengers were aroused by the violent squealing of a pig.

Of course, all eyes were turned upon the newcomer, and no one doubted but that he had a young porker in his box. He of course heard the seeming pig squeal, but knowing that he did not have a pig in his box, he paid no further attention to it than to make up his mind that somebody else had a pig in the car.

"Put him out!" shouted somebody, and the cry was instantly taken up.

"This is not a cattle car, sir," said one indignant passenger, addressing the stranger.

"Wal, who in thunder said it was?" he asked, looking at him severely.

"But you have got a pig in your box, and it annoys the passengers, sir."

"Guess you have woke up the wrong passenger, mister," said the man with the box.

"We will see whether I have or not. Here, conductor!" he called, as that official came into the car at that moment.

"Well, sir, what is it?"

"A pig, sir, a pig!" roared the indignant passenger.

"Where?" asked the astonished conductor, looking around upon the passengers.

"In that box, sir; and he is annoying us by his squealing, sir. If this is a cattle train, I would like to know it, sir. It is quite bad enough to be bored by spoonies, let alone having a pig brought into the car."

"Have you a pig in that box?" asked the conductor, addressing the new passenger.

"No, sir; it is a cat that I am taking home to a maiden aunt in Worcester," replied the man, indignantly.

"Cat!" exclaimed several of the passengers.

"Of course it is—a Maltese cat."

"Well, don't let it annoy the passengers," said the conductor, going from the car.

This ended the business for a few moments, and the indignant passenger who objected to traveling on a cattle train gradually subsided.

Bob was convulsed with laughter and very proud of his success. How exceedingly simple the business was when you once got hold of the secret!

He at once made up his mind to work it for all it was worth—indeed, the fun he had indulged in during the whole course of his life he thought would be nothing compared with what he should enjoy hereafter. And how he wished he was back again to Backstrap's school! What slathers of fun he could have!

Then he noticed that the spoony couple were having it bad again, and he only waited until the train stopped at the next station, when he said:

"Oh, George, does oo tub I?"

She was resting her head on his shoulder, and this was said loud enough to be heard by nearly everybody in the car; consequently there was a general looking around and laugh, while the young husband and wife blushed scarlet and appeared greatly confused, although, as before, they of course did not know what to make of it.

"Wal, I swash! I'd be ashamed!" exclaimed a motherly old lady sitting near; and this, of course, only made matters worse.

That spoony couple at once detached themselves, and both became deeply interested on what was going on outside, while before the train started on the laughter subsided. Bob again turned his attention to the passenger with the box, once more imitating the hungry, irritated squeal of a pig.

This diverted attention from the spoonies, and once more brought the indignant passenger to his feet.

"There goes that abominable pig again!" he cried, as the train started.

"And up jumps the old hog again!" said Bob, making his voice sound as though it belonged to the man with the box.

This produced another outburst of laughter, in which even the bride and bridegroom joined, while the indignant passenger got red in the face.

"Do you dare to call me a hog, sir?" he shouted, springing towards him.

"I didn't call you anything," said the man, utterly astonished.

"Don't you tell me that I lie, sir. Everybody heard you, and you are a scoundrel, sir," said he, shaking his fist in his face.

"Say, you, mister, you'd better put down that old tater masher of yours," replied the man, now in turn becoming a trifle riled.

"You called me a hog, sir!"

"And you called my cat a pig, sir."

"And so it is a pig, sir, one of your own kith and kin, sir; yes, sir, one of your family, sir!"

"You are an old duffer, sir."

"Oh, I am, am I? First I am a hog and now I am a duffer, am I?"

"Hit him!" shouted Bob, in a voice coming from somewhere.

"No, no, don't!" screamed several women.

"Go away and mind your own business!" said the man with the box.

"You are a nuisance, sir, and you must get out of this car."

"Well, you just try to put me out."

"So I will, you pig carrier!" and the indignant passenger attempted to lay hands on him.

Something tumbled over just then, but it wasn't the man with the box.

Women screamed and several passengers hastened to assist the indignant protestor to his feet, while he with the box stood perfectly quiet.

"Want any more?" he finally asked.

"You—you—" gasped the man, and then he clutched his bleeding nose, and ran to the water-cooler.

There was a great hubbub, although no one who had witnessed the affair could blame the man who was supposed to have a pig in his box.

And just then the conductor entered the car, and of course several passengers told him of the affair, and implored him to put a stop to the further shedding of blood. But being a square man, he at once concluded that the party who was then engaged in bathing his nose in ice water was wholly to blame, provided no real offense had been given.

"But just for curiosity, I would like to have a look at the inside of that box," said he.

"Certainly. There it is," replied the man, showing the front of the box on which was nailed two or three slats, and sure enough, there was a quiet, peaceful cat reposing, but evidently wondering what all the rumpus was about.

Several interested passengers, Bob Rollick among the others, got up and took a look at poor tabby, and then there was a general smile.

"It strikes me that you have been making a fool of yourself," said the conductor, turning to he of the ensanguinized snout. "That gentleman has simply got an innocent cat in his box, and you accused him of having a pig."

"But he assaulted me, sir."

"But you laid hands on him first, and the best thing you can do is take a seat in another car," replied the conductor, taking up a few tickets, and going from the car.

A general titter went around through the passengers, and seeing that it was all against him, that indignant and swollen-nosed man gathered up his bundles, and passed into another car.

Bob had enjoyed all this hugely, not only because of the fun that really came out of it, but also because

he had been enabled to work his newly-attained art and accomplishment so well.

After these episodes, everything went smooth again until the train had neared Worcester, to which place the spoony bride and bridegroom were going.

They had evidently forgotten the attention they had attracted to themselves before, and were again so demonstrative in their fondness for each other that several people were watching them, some with smiles, and others with contemptuous sneers, to think that young married folks would make such exhibitions of themselves in public.

The train drew up at the Junction, the last stop before reaching Worcester proper, and Bob again took advantage of it.

"Oh, Clara, ducky dear, we shall soon be there!" the passengers thought they heard him say.

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed one old fellow, who had been annoyed by them all the journey.

"Oh, George!" she seemed to say; and amid another roar of laughter, the two victims braced up, blushed, and looked around.

They knew very well that they had said nothing, but for all that they understood that somebody had. They turned to look at Bob, but to all appearances he was sleeping just as soundly as ever, and again they were puzzled. They whispered something to each other, and then turned their attention again to what was passing outside of the car.

"That's the worst case of spoons ever I saw," said one passenger to another.

"Yes, they've got them bad."

"Wal, if that are war my darter, married or not married, I'd just take her over my knee an' larn her a little decency," protested an old lady, who was making preparations to leave the car when it entered the depot.

The poor spoonies felt like going through the floor, and just as soon as they could get out of the car, they took a carriage and were driven to a hotel.

Bob took his sample trunks, and was himself driven to the Bay State Hotel, where, tired, hungry, and dusty, he retired to brush up and to laugh over the adventures of the day.

Presently one of the porters brought up his largest sample trunk to the room.

"Begorra, sur, but it's heavy," said he, in broad Irish brogue, at the same time puffing—puffing and blowing for a quarter.

"Heavy?" asked Bob, cheerfully.

"Ye may well say that same. Sure it nearly broke me back in luggin' it up."

"Did you handle it carefully?"

"I did, sur."

"Are you sure?"

"I am."

"Did you feel anything move in it?"

"I did not."

"Well, then, I'm afraid you must have hurt my—I say," said Bob, going to the trunk and tapping upon the lid with his knuckle. "are you all right, Bob?"

"No, me back is broke!" came in smothered tones from the interior of the trunk.

That porter started back in astonishment.

"Fut is it?" he finally asked.

"That? Say, don't give me away, will you?" he suddenly asked, turning to the bewildered porter.

"Fut der yes mane?"

"Don't say anything about this. The fact is, I kidnapped a boy in Springfield, and am going to take him on to Boston."

"Howly Moses!"

"But you must have given him a terrible shaking up, for he says his back is broke."

"Sure I was as aisy as anything wld it."

"I say! what happened you?" asked Bob, again tapping upon the trunk.

"I was dropped down a flight of stairs!" came as before from the interior.

"Do you hear that? Is that the way you handle the luggage of guests?" demanded Bob, angrily.

"Faith, an' it is not so. Divil a toime I drapped it at all, at all," protested the porter.

"It's a lie!" came from the trunk.

That porter jumped back about two yards, and then rushed wildly from the room.

It is unnecessary to say that he lost no time in reporting the affair to his employer, and the thought of having such a person in that hotel was not to be tolerated for a moment.

Therefore, an officer was at once summoned, and together they all visited Bob's room. By this time he had nearly completed his toilet, and a loud rap startled him. He threw open the door.

"I am an officer of the law, sir," said the officer, bustling into the room.

"Yes, sir," said Bob, tumbling at once.

"Who are you, sir?"

"I am Bob Rollick, Yankee notion drummer for Slope, Slimmer & Co., New York," replied Bob, with the promptitude of a drum-major.

"Ah! a drummer for Yankee notions?"

"Yes, sir, can I show you some samples?"

"Yes, you can. Open your trunks!" said the officer, with great authority.

"This wan," said the porter, pointing to the one from which he had heard the voice.

"Certainly," and he at once took out his keys and opened the designated trunk.

Then standing back, he motioned the officer, the landlord, and the porter to take a look, at the same time asking them what they would like to buy.

That enterprising and eagle-eyed officer of the law proceeded to pull Bob's samples out upon the floor, while the other two stood expectant by.

"Where is that—that human being you had locked up in your trunk?" demanded the officer.

"What?"

"This man said you had somebody in this trunk."

"He did?"
 "To be sure he did," said the landlord.
 "I say, are you this fellow's boss?" asked Bob.
 "Yes. Why?"
 "I suspected that he was a crank, for I saw him with his ear to the keyhole of that trunk after he had brought it up, and he appeared to be talking to somebody inside of it. I tell you he's off his nut," said Bob.
 "Is that so, Tim?" asked the landlord, turning upon his porter, while the officer was going through the other trunks.
 "Sure, sir, an' I don't know," replied Tim, utterly bewildered at the situation.
 "Well, if you don't, I'll show you. All this has been brought about by your stupidity, and I strongly sus-

"No, sir, I don't want anything to do with your New York concerns. I can buy all I want in Boston."
 "But of course you will buy where you can do the best?"
 "That is my own business, sir. I don't ask you where I shall buy, or when, or how," he replied, crabbedly.
 "Of course not, sir; but—"
 "That is enough. I know my business."
 "Very well," replied Bob, and, closing the trunk he had opened, he took up another one that had been setting on the counter, when a smothered voice seemingly inside of it, called:
 "Help! lemme out!" and Bob, appearing to be greatly confused, started hurriedly from the store.

"Goods, to be sure. What should I have?"
 "Open it and let us see."
 "Do you want to buy?"
 "Open that trunk or I will take you in."
 "For what?"
 "On suspicion. Open it!"
 "This is an outrage, sir: what business have you to demand such a thing of me?"
 "Open it and I will soon show you."
 "Can he compel me to open it?" asked Bob, turning to the proprietor of the store.
 "Yes, of course he can. What have you got in it?" he asked, with a frown.
 "He's got some sort of a human being in it, that's what he has, for I heard it cry to be let out."
 "Open it instantly!" thundered the officer.



On his return, however, he found that Muldoon had been having a little amusement with the supposed other monkey whom he saw in the glass, and in trying to hit him with a stone match-safe, had smashed the mirror into fifty pieces.

pect that you have been drinking. I am sorry to have annoyed you in this manner, Mr. Rollick, but it was all on account of this fellow's stupidity. I will try to make amends," and all three of them got out as gracefully as they could, leaving our friend Bob alone for a laugh all by himself.

CHAPTER IV.

BOB ROLLOCK was in Worcester, Massachusetts, where he had enjoyed a racket at the expense of one of the porters of the Bay State Hotel, whom he had made believe there was somebody in one of his trunks, by his ventriloquial powers, but as yet he had done nothing in the drumming line.

As for the porter, Tim, he was about the saddest looking individual to be found. Indeed, he wasn't certain but what Bob had said of him to his boss was true—that he was off his nut.

But Bob did not follow up the racket. He thought perhaps he might take it up again at some other time, but he made up his mind to do a little business first.

So he started out on Main street with his samples, and took in one of the establishments that he had down on his book.

But the trader was a stingy old Yank, and would never buy anything while he had a single sample left, and he pretended that he had a plenty of everything on hand. At all events, Bob could not sell him a cent's worth of anything, so he resolved to have some fun with him.

"You needn't bother me any more, young man, for I will not buy to-day," said he.

"Well, let me leave you our list of prices, and you can order on it from New York yourself," suggested Bob, respectfully.

"Hey, here, hold on!" cried the merchant, calling after him.

"What do you want?" asked Bob, while just in the act of going out.

"What have you got in that other trunk?"

"Nothing," replied Bob, seemingly anxious to get away.

"Stop a minute. Let me see what you have got there."

"No, sir. We can't trade, so good-bye," and he rushed out of the store.

"There's some villainy in this, sure. Those New Yorkers are up to everything that is bad, and I'm bound to find out what this is; he's got a human being of some kind in that trunk," and hastily locking his store, he followed after Bob, all the while looking for a police officer.

Bob, in the meantime, had found another store, and had gone into it to see if he could do a little business.

The suspicious old Yank soon found an officer and told his story, after which they went into the other store, where Bob was just in the act of showing his samples.

"There he is; arrest him!" said the man, at which, naturally enough, the other merchant started in surprise, although Bob tumbled to the snap right away.

"Here, young fellow, what have you got in that hand-trunk?" demanded the officer, gruffly.

"That one there," added the suspicious man, pointing to the unopened one.

"Why, samples, of course," replied Bob, at the same time pretending to be confused.

"Samples! Look out for this fellow, Mr. Pratt, he has just left my store."

"Samples of what?" asked the officer.

Bob caught the astonished merchant's eye and gave him a wink, then taking a key he unlocked and threw open the hand-trunk.

All three of them made a rush to see what was in it, fully expecting to see a human being pop up from the interior.

To their great astonishment they saw only samples of goods, and nothing at all suspicious.

Then they exchanged wondering glances, and looked both foolish and puzzled.

"What is the meaning of this?" asked the officer, addressing Bob.

"I give it up, boss."

"This gentleman says he heard the voice of some one in that hand-trunk."

"Oh, he did, eh?"

"I'll swear to it, sir."

"Well, if you did, it must be in there now. Let's see," and Bob closed the trunk again.

"Hello, Jim!" he called, tapping on the side of it.

"Hello!" came from within, and they all started back in wonderment.

"Are you in there all right, Jim?"

"Yes. Didn't we play it nice on that old fool, Brown?"

"Yes, I think we did. He has come to have me arrested."

"Tell him to go soak his head!"

"But it is so soft it might all go to pieces."

"It won't be any loss if it does!" and then Bob threw open the trunk again.

"Ventriloquism, by Jove!" exclaimed the officer, laughing.

"And deuced clever, too. Young man, allow me to congratulate you," said Mr. Pratt, offering his hand, while the old chap with the dread suspicions banged

his hat down upon his head and made a bee-line for the door, out of which he vanished.

They all three enjoyed a hearty laugh at the sell that Bob had played on the old curmudgeon, and while the officer went out to tell his acquaintances about it, the merchant concluded to buy.

The upshot of the racket was that Bob sold a large bill of goods here and at other stores, and got all ready to leave for Boston that night; for "Bosting Town" he was bound for.

But the racket on old "Suspicious" soon got all over Worcester, and the more the story went, the funnier it became, until the old man wished with all his heart that he had bought everything Bob had for sale.

At all events Bob got away from the place all hunk,

altar," said he; "of this spot it was that Shakespeare wrote those beautiful lines:

"When freedom from her mountain height
Unfurled her banner to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night
And set the stars of glory there."

"Oh, was Mr. Shakespeare here?" asked the old lady, looking anxiously at him.

"Certainly, and you may have read from another of his poems, referring to the erection of a statue to Warren on this spot:

"When we raised our marble hero
To its niche on Bunker Hill."

"In the water-pipe business, was he?"

"Oh, no; he just went up to take a look, and became dizzy-headed."

"Poor critter!"

"And here is where he fell," said Bob, taking out his handkerchief and wiping his eyes.

"Dear me! Did it kill him?" asked the daughter.

"Oh, yes; he never got over it."

"Poor man!"

"Yes, I have read about it. Great man he was; and here was where he fell!" said the minister, removing his hat, reverently.

"Ah! those were terrible times," the old lady chimed in, sorrowfully.

"Dreadful!" chimed the daughter, and then the minister, evidently fearful that Bob would become a



Muldoon seemed to understand the situation; at least he leaped up upon the magistrate's desk and sat there looking soberly down at the crowd of people who stood around to hear the case.

sending home to New York a big order, besides all the fun he had. And yet, even all this did not please him so much as it did to know that he had at last mastered the art of ventriloquism; the very thing he had wished for so often and so earnestly.

The trip between Worcester and Boston was only a commonplace affair, nothing happening out of the ordinary run, and no opportunity presenting itself for him to have any fun at the expense of any one.

Arriving in Boston, he was driven to the American House, on Hanover street, where he took up his headquarters, knowing that he would have to be in the city at least a fortnight before he could finish the work he had in hand there.

It was the first time he had ever been in the famous city, although he had heard about it ever since he had heard of any place outside of New York, and so before attempting to do any business, he made up his mind to see what the place was like, and if it was really so much ahead of New York as natives of the place claimed it was.

He visited the Common, the State House, the Public Library, Quincy Market (and there, at least, he saw how much ahead Boston was of New York), after which he went over to Charlestown, where he visited the Navy Yard and Bunker Hill Monument, and various other points of interest.

It was while gazing up at the monument, two hundred and twenty-two feet in height, that he was approached by an old country minister, who was taking in the scene for the first time.

"Wonderful!" he heard him exclaim, while expatiating upon it for the benefit of an old lady and her daughter who accompanied him, and sizing him up he saw how light-waisted he was, and how little he knew of what he was talking about.

"We are standing on freedom's first American

"Very lovely; but who was this Warren?" asked the young lady.

Well, to save his life, the very fresh preacher could not answer the question. He had heard of Warren, but as for the particulars he had none, and as he saw Bob watching him closely, he hardly knew what to say for fear he might put his foot into something historical.

"Perhaps this young man can tell us all about Mr. Warren," said the old lady, turning to Bob.

"Yes," suggested the young lady, who was slightly taken with the handsome young drummer-boy of New York.

"Ah, are you acquainted here?" the minister asked, seeing that his companions were so much interested.

"Me? Certainly. Born and brought up right around here," replied Bob, innocently.

"Ah! Well, please tell us something about the place. You see, we are strangers here. I have heard or read something about this man Warren. He fell here, didn't he?" asked the minister.

"Oh, yes; come right this way and I will show you where he fell," said Bob, leading the way a few rods from the monument to where a stone tablet a few inches above the sod marks the spot where the great patriot fell in battle.

They all stood around and gazed upon it, and read the inscription: "Here fell Warren."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed the old lady. "He fell here, did he?"

"Right here," said Bob, "and it was a terrible fall," he added.

"How was it?"

"Well, you see he got to feeling pretty good one day, and so he went up to the top of the monument to pipe off the city."

greater man than he was if he allowed him to remain led the way to another portion of the grounds.

Bob laughed heartily, and took a seat on one of the benches to rest and watch the patriotic pilgrims. But presently one of the guides of the grounds came along, and being approached, gave them a true history of the old battle which makes the spot renowned, and an explanation of the tablet which marks the spot where Warren fell.

Bob knew well enough what was going on, but kept perfectly quiet, and seemed to be wholly absorbed in what he saw.

Presently the party came along past the place where he was seated, and all three of them gave him a terrible black look, although he did not appear to know they were within a hundred miles of him.

It was especially rough on that minister, but you bet that Bob enjoyed it for all there was in it. It was just his racket.

Well, after taking in all the sights that were worth seeing, he returned to his hotel, and was ready for business the next day, although he had yet to become acquainted much more with the lay of the land before he felt perfectly at home.

The next day he went around the wharves and scooped in all the novelty he could find, and at a sailors' resort near Commercial Wharf he came across an old Jack-tar, dead broke, as they generally are after being a few days ashore, and all he had in the world was an old monkey, one of the most comical-looking ones Bob had ever seen, and at once he took a great fancy to the beast.

This Jack-tar was an Italian, and had picked up the monkey somewhere in South America. He had been a blooming nuisance on ship-board, but by some means or other he had managed to save his life until

reaching port, and now, after all of his money had gone, he wanted to sell the monk.

"What will you take for him?" asked Bob, who had been watching him for some time.

"I taka tena dolla for ze monk; how mucha you giva?" said the owner.

"Oh, you'll take ten dollars, eh; and want to know how much I'll give? Well, I'll give you five dollars for him," replied Bob.

"Fiva dolla! Oh, vera fina monk!"

"Take five?"

"Monk cheapa ten; vera fina monk. Maka twenta dolla in No Yika for zata monk."

"Can he talk?"

"No talka," replied the Italian, astonished.

"Dead out! Monkeys that don't talk are no good. But I'll give you five dollars for him."

"Santa Margurita! Taka monk!" said the Italian, evincing both sorrow and disgust at having to part with him at such a low figure.

Bob handed him a five-dollar note, and took the chain which held his monkey. It was only an ordinary monkey, peculiar in nothing but the comicality of its facial expression.

What under heaven he bought it for he could hardly tell himself; only he had a liking for the creature, and a dim idea that he could have some fun with him; only the question was, how was he to take care of him, and carry him around with him?

Bob patted the solemn-looking beast on the head, fed him liberally, while the sailor proceeded to invest the five dollars in rum.

The monkey appeared to take to his new owner right away, and those who had witnessed the transaction stood around to see what the young fellow would do with him.

Bob thought he would try a little ventriloquism with his new possession, and presently began.

"Gentlemen," said he, "this is a good bargain I have made. I didn't know it when I made it, but I find that this is a *talking* monkey."

"What! a talking monkey?" they all exclaimed.

"Yes; I am sure of it."

"Monka no talka; monka cut up shina, but monk no talka," said the late owner.

"I'll bet you the treats that I can make him talk," said Bob, with much earnestness.

"Oh, I beta drinka."

"All right. I'll take it. What is his name?"

"Jack."

"Very good; now we'll see about it. I say, Jack, how do you like the change?"

"Bully!" the monkey seemed to say, while those standing around started up in astonishment.

"You can talk, can't you?"

"Of course I can; better than that Dago can."

The Italian seemed ready to sink down upon the floor.

"Didn't I tell you? I knew he was one of those talking monkeys. Now, what do you say?" he asked, turning to the Italian.

"Taka backa fiva dolla?" he replied, quickly.

"Not much. This monkey is worth a cool thousand dollars. Come, Jack," he added, taking the monkey up in his arms.

"Coma backa! Taka fiva dolla; giva backa monk!" cried the Italian, starting towards him.

"Good-bye, old Dago!" the monkey seemed to say, and indeed he was looking back at him as Bob uttered the words, which made it seem even more real.

"Giva backa monk!" again cried the Italian, approaching Bob with a clenched fist.

"Not much," replied Bob, calmly facing him.

"Breaka head!" and he attempted to strike him.

But Bob was too quick, and dodged neatly to one side, at the same time pulling a revolver and covering the rascal with it.

The swarthy villain slunk back into the room, while the bystanders laughed and cheered Bob's plucky conduct.

"Get out, yer Dago!" the monkey snarled, as Bob turned and walked away.

The other sailors laughed heartily at the Italian's discomfiture, but it would be hard to say which of them all was the most astonished, for all believed that they had heard a supposed dumb beast speak, which, of course, was as great a miracle as that affair of Baalam and his ass.

But certainly the most disgusted one of the party was the late owner of this wonderful animal, for he felt certain that he had unknowingly sold for a paltry five dollars a curiosity worth many hundreds; and, resolving not to be cheated in that manner, he started out to follow Bob.

Bob Rollick was the happiest fellow in the world. Ever since he could remember he had loved monkeys, and always wished to possess one, although what the dickens he was going to do with it while traveling he could scarcely guess. But he thought he could manage him somehow until he finished his circuit, and then take him back to New York, where he could give him to some person to keep for him.

He finally reached his hotel, and gave his prize the liberty of his room, where the first thing he did was to jump up on top of the bureau and take a look at himself in the glass, after which he turned around and took a look at Bob.

"Well, aren't you a beauty!" exclaimed he, laughing heartily. "But you shall no longer be called Jocko; your name is Muldoon from this time forward," he added, at which the monkey slowly turned around and took another look at himself in the glass. "Good likeness, eh?" and just then the serious-looking beast nodded as though understanding and agreeing with him.

"All right, Muldoon; you remain here until I go out and get you some cakes and nuts," and, closing

the door, he started out for that purpose, leaving the monkey on the bureau.

On his return, however, he found that Muldoon had been having a little amusement with the supposed other monkey whom he saw in the glass, and in trying to hit him with a stone match-safe, had smashed the mirror into fifty pieces, into one of which he was looking with a comical gravity as Bob entered the room.

He understood the situation at a glance, and he also understood that he had got an expensive pet on his hands.

This made him feel a trifle serious as he stood there contemplating the ruins of at least a five-dollar mirror, but before he got through with his thinking the door of his room was rudely opened, and a policeman entered, followed by the Italian of whom he had so lately purchased the monkey.

CHAPTER V.

THE situation in which Bob Rollick found himself at the close of the last chapter will be remembered. The Italian of whom he had bought the monkey, whose name he had changed from Jocko to *Muldoon*, on account of his remarkable resemblance to that individual, had followed him with an officer for the purpose of getting back the supposed talking monkey.

"Ah! zere ze monk!" exclaimed he, pointing to the sober-looking animal, who was still regarding himself in a piece of the mirror he had smashed in his endeavors to get at the supposed other monkey who stood behind it.

"What is the trouble, officer?" asked Bob, as soon as he recovered from his surprise.

"This man says you stole a monkey from him," replied the official.

"If he says so he lies, and I can prove it. I gave him five dollars for the monkey," replied Bob.

"Me no. Monk talka; monka wortha thousand dolla. He steala monk an' shoota me wida pistola," exclaimed the Italian.

"Well, young fellow, I shall have to take you before the police magistrate so long as he persists in his statement," said the policeman.

"All right, but you must let me send for the witnesses of the transaction," replied Bob, taking *Muldoon* under his arm.

"Certainly; I will go for them myself," and all three of them started for the court.

Bob wasn't locked up exactly, but he was placed in the prisoners' room while the complaint was being written out and the officer hunting up the sailors who had witnessed the transaction and getting them into court to testify.

Of course he kept *Muldoon* with him, for, in fact, the animal had taken a great fancy to him, probably on account of his kindness and the good things he had given him to eat. Indeed, while they were waiting for the case to come up, he was feeding him and making the friendship stronger between him.

It was an hour or two before the case came up, but finally Bob and his monkey were taken into the court-room.

Muldoon seemed to understand the situation; at least he leaped up upon the magistrate's desk and sat there looking soberly down at the crowd of people who stood around to hear the case.

"Ah! zere is ze monk!" exclaimed the Italian, pointing exultingly to *Muldoon*, at which the animal began chattering and striking at him.

"Is this the animal in question?" asked the judge.

"Ze monk is mine."

"Your honor, I bought the monkey of this man and paid five dollars for him," said Bob, respectfully.

"Have you any witnesses?"

"Yes, sir; these men saw me when I bought and paid for him."

"What do you know about it?" asked the judge, addressing one old sailor. "Step up here; what is your name and business?"

"My name's John Briggs, yer honor, an' I'm a sailor on ther *Betsy Gingle*, runnin' atween this port an' Rio," replied the old salt, carefully stowing away in his hat a quide of tobacco, which he had taken from his mouth.

He was a typical old salt.

"Did you see this young man buy this monkey of this man?"

"Wal, yer honor, I'm sorter kubber-flusted," said he, squirting a stream of tobacco juice over his shoulder, and hitting a cop who was standing in the way.

"Look out what you are about!" cried the disgusted officer.

"Be a trifle more careful with your juice ejector. What do you mean by saying that you are kubber-flusted?"

"Wal, yer honor, that's what we sailors call it," he replied.

"But what do you mean by it?"

"Wal, sorter kerflummuxed."

"Nonsense; that is worse and worse."

"Yes, yer honor, that's it."

"But what do you mean by it?"

"Sorter rounced around," said he, amid a shout of laughter in the court.

"Silence!" cried the judge, angrily. "Now, sir, what do you mean?" he added, addressing the witness.

"Wal, yer honor, this is how it is. Yer see we war a junketin' like down ter a tavern down below here, an' this here 'Talian war a cuttin' up monkey shines with this here monkey, when this young feller sorter drifted inter this place an' anchored. Wal, bimeby, he axed ther 'Talian how much he'd take for ther monkey."

"But does this explain what you mean by being kubberflusted?"

"Yer honor, I'm steerin' for it under all sail," replied the sailor.

"Well, hurry up."

"Wal, ther 'Talian wanted ten dollars for it an' ther chap said he'd give him five for the critter. an' bimeby he took it."

"But I see nothing remarkable about that. Were you trifling when you said that you were kubberflusted?"

"No, yer honor."

"Well, what was it?"

"Yer honor, yer won't b'leve me."

"What about?"

"If I tell yer."

"Let me see whether I can or not."

"Wal, yer honor, I can prove it by these men here. That chap he took that monkey an' talked with him," said he, earnestly.

"What was there remarkable about that? I have heard men talk to all sorts of animals."

"But, yer honor, the monkey talked!"

"What nonsense!"

"I'll take my davy of it," said he, striking the railing with his big fist, "and what's more these men 'll take their davy's too," said he, pointing to them.

"Yesa, monk talka; he talka monk," said the Italian, earnestly.

"This is a case of trifling that amounts to an insult to the court, and I shall lock you all up for it."

"Yer honor, ask these men," said the astonished witness.

"No, sir, for I would not believe that a dumb animal talked if fifty men should tell me so."

"But yer've hearn tell about Balaam an' his ass, haint yer?"

"Nonsense; the age of miracles has passed, and any number of drunken sailors cannot revive it, or insult this court by coming into it and swearing to such an absurdity as this one is. I shall lock you up for a week and fine you ten dollars, as well as the Italian."

"Oh, yer honor!" exclaimed the witness.

"Not a word. Remove them, officer."

"Your honor," said Bob Rollick, speaking up for the first time, "I think I can explain this mystery, if you will allow me to do so."

"No, sir; and if you presume to add your testimony to that of these two men, I will serve you as I have served them," said the judge, severely.

"Your honor, I will not do so. The monkey did *not* talk."

At this the others started in surprise.

"Well, what are these men talking about?"

"I will explain rather than have this man committed for contempt, although the Italian deserves such a punishment for his lying."

"My monk talka," persisted the Italian.

"Shut up!" roared an officer.

"I am a ventriloquist, your honor, and that explains the entire mystery."

At this the court laughed, although the witnesses did not understand anything about the business.

"Just give us an exhibition of your powers."

"Certainly, if your honor will not be hard on this poor sailor, for he thought he was telling the truth."

"Well, proceed."

"Hello, *Muldoon*, how do you feel?" he asked, addressing the sober-looking monkey, who still sat upon the judge's desk.

"Bully," he seemed to answer, at which the judge started as well as the others.

"What do you think of that bloody Italian?" he asked, pointing to him.

"Ah! he speaka!" cried he.

"He's a fraud!" said the monkey.

"There, yer honor, hear that!" exclaimed the witness, and the others cried, "Yes!"

"But are you such fools as to believe that the monkey actually speaks?"

"Can't yer hear?"

"Oh, yes, I hear."

"I say, *Muldoon*, is it a sell?"

"The worst I ever saw!"

"That settles it. The animal is yours undoubtedly; and as for this Italian, I shall give him three months for perjury," said the judge.

"Serves him right!"

"I wanta my monk! I giva backa fiva dolla," protested he.

"No, sir; you sold the monkey."

"Monk, coma to mea," said he, holding out his hands for him to jump.

"All right; we'll see which one he will come to," said Bob, holding out his hands, the same as the Italian.

Muldoon knew his business well enough, and, taking a leap, he landed squarely on Bob's shoulder.

That Italian was badly defeated and broken up, and to cap the climax an officer took him in hand and started him to prison.

"You are discharged," said the judge to the poor sailor, who had been in such terror for fear he would have to go to prison.

"Thank you, judge, but—"

"That is all right. You have been made a fool of. That's all," he added, waving them all away.

"Good-bye, judge!" the monkey seemed to say.

"Good-bye, *Muldoon*," replied the judge, laughing with the others under him.

They all started out of the court-room, and of course Bob Rollick and his monkey were the center of attraction.

"Say, how was it, anyhow?" asked the sailor witness, who had been on the ragged edge of being committed to prison.

"Oh, that's all right, old man, only don't bract

against the pack," said Bob, as he prepared to leave triumphantly with his monkey.

"But he torked—say, how was it, anyhow?"

"Good-bye, old pards, Bob and I are going to work this thing now," the monkey seemed to say.

And, although greatly mystified all through the business, the sailors braced up and insisted upon knowing all about it.

But of course they could not be let into the whole thing, because Bob did not care to give the whole thing away. There was too much fun in it, and so he shouldered his monkey and started again for his hotel.

"Wait a moment," and they started after him, determined to learn how the thing was, if possible.

"Come in and have a drink," said Bob. "It was very good of you to testify for me in this business, and the least I can do is to treat you; so come on."

Without the slightest hesitation they accepted the invitation and followed him.

Bob treated them all to whatever they wanted, and then turned his attention to *Muldoon*.

"What will you have, *Muldoon*?" he asked.

"Give me some beer," said the monk, and while the sailors laughed, the bar-keeper started back in amazement.

"What the deuce is that?" he finally asked.

"That? Oh, this is Mr. *Muldoon*, and he wants a glass of beer," replied Bob.

"Come, hurry up," said the animal, or at least he seemed to say so, which puzzled the bar-keeper more than ever.

"But he talks."

"Certainly."

"And he's only a monkey."

"Of course."

"But I don't understand it."

"Neither does *Muldoon*," said Bob, laughing.

"Well, that beats the Old Boy."

"Tell us how he does it, won't you?" asked two or three of the sailors.

"All right, so long as I have put you to so much trouble. It is simply ventriloquism," said Bob.

"What's that?"

"Anything like Millerism?"

"Or Mesmerism?" suggested another.

"Oh, no; it is simply the art of imitating sounds in such a way as to make them appear in different places. Some people call it throwing the voice."

"Oh, I've heard about that," said a sailor.

"So have I," the others added.

"But it is not throwing the voice at all. For instance, to make it appear to you that there is a dog outside of that door, I have simply to imitate the barking as it would sound if a dog actually was there," and going to the door on the side of the room, he imitated the barking of a dog outside so artistically that it was hard to believe that there was not a dog outside. Indeed, after Bob had finished, the sailors opened the door and looked carefully around to satisfy themselves.

"Well, you're the boss boy."

"Have a drink with me," and they all crowded around to shake hands with Bob.

But after remaining there for a short time, Bob took his monkey under his arm and returned to the hotel.

Here he found the ruins of the looking-glass that *Muldoon* had shattered just before he was arrested and taken away.

The monkey leaped again upon the bureau and resumed his business of looking at himself in the pieces of mirror that lay strewn around.

"Well, *Mul*, we have had quite a racket, haven't we? But, between you and I, old man, I think I've got an elephant on my hands. What the deuce am I going to do with you when I go out to business?"

Muldoon didn't answer, but went on with his examination of himself, making up all sorts of snoots at himself, but all the while very sober.

Monkeys are so full of mischief that a person would almost think that they could laugh, especially at some of their comical doings, but they never do. Man is the only animal that laughs.

Bob took pains to see that there was no other mischief that *Muldoon* could do, and thinking that he would amuse himself by looking at his homely mug in the piece of mirror, he placed some cakes, nuts, and raisins where he could get at them, and then taking his sample trunks, locked him in the room and started out to see if he could drum up a little business.

We will not follow him this time, only saying that he managed to strike a few first-rate orders, but remain with *Muldoon*.

He scarcely noticed that his new master had left him, but there he sat looking at himself in the piece of broken mirror.

Every minute or so he would lower it, and look behind it to see the other monkey, and it was enough to make a cow laugh to see the capers he cut up in trying to solve the mystery.

Then he would take up other pieces and look into them. Indeed, if he had been capable of thought, he must have concluded that there were any quantity of monkeys in the room.

For an hour or two he amused himself in this way, but finally the chambermaid went into the room with her pass-key for the purpose of leaving some towels.

On beholding the monkey perched upon the bureau she uttered a prolonged scream, dropped her armful of towels and made a dash out of the place, although *Muldoon* took not the slightest notice of her.

"What is it?" asked a fellow servant.

"Howly mother! but ther divil's in the room shavin' himself wid a piece av lookin'-glass!" said she.

"Fut's that ye say?" asked another servant, a native of the Emerald Isle.

"Begorra, but it's thrue for me. I seen him sittin' on the bury."

"Hould on, now, Bridget; go aisy," said the other, placing her finger alongside of her nose and looking uncommonly wise and smart.

"Why wud I go aisy?"

"Ye wor out ter a wake last night."

"Well, fut av that?"

"Yees came home full of jig wather."

"I did?"

"Yer did."

"An' fut has that ter do wid it?"

"It makes yees sa things ther next day. I've been there mesill, so I have."

"Is that so?"

"It is."

"Have yees ther bravery ter take a look at it?" she asked, at which the other two laughed in a most uproarious manner.

"Come on! I's dare yees!"

"Oh, fut are yees givin' us? Der yer moind her! She says ther divil's in No. 89, shavin' himself wid a piece av glass!"

"Come an' see."

"We will."

They started for the room, making believe they were very bold, but in reality not one of the three of them cared really to enter it, being naturally superstitious.

But the girl who had raised the alarm finally plucked up courage enough to throw open the door, and the others timidly looked in.

There sat *Muldoon*, looking at himself and making up faces to the monkey in the piece of mirror.

This was too much, and uttering a concerted yell they all ran away, fully believing that they had seen the devil, and no mistake.

Naturally enough all this attracted the attention of others, and before long a dozen heads were out of as many doors, and asking what the matter was.

Then came the clerk to clear it up if he could. He entered the room and took a look at sober old *Muldoon*.

"Why, you fools, it's only a monkey," said he.

"What is the matter with you?"

"Sure, an' it's ther divil."

"Shut up! This room is occupied by Bob Rollick, the New York Yankee Notions drummer, and this must be his monkey. But, confound him, he has smashed the mirror. What are you doing?" he added, addressing *Muldoon*.

The monkey turned and took a look at him; then setting up a mild chattering, he threw a piece of the mirror at him, which caused the servant girls to scream and run for dear life.

Just then Bob Rollick returned, and seeing his room open and the excitement around it, he was naturally interested.

"What's the row here?" he finally asked.

"These people have been trying to rob you!" the monkey seemed to say, and Bob chanced to take him just as he was opening and shutting his mouth in an ugly way.

That settled it, and not only the girls, who were looking in at the door, but the clerk as well, took to their heels and left without ceremony.

CHAPTER VI.

It wasn't five minutes before the news spread through the hotel that the young New York drummer had a talking monkey.

Of course no sensible person believed it, although the servants all did, but everybody seemed anxious to see the curiosity, whatever it was.

The hotel clerk had heard the wonderful animal inform his master that they had all been into his room for the purpose of robbing him, and he told it over and over, while the servants talked about it among themselves, and concluded that *Muldoon* was a veritable devil and no mistake.

Never had such a thing been heard of in Boston before, and finally a party of guests and servants started for Bob's room for the purpose of investigating the matter.

Meantime Bob had been feeding and talking to *Muldoon*. He had made up his mind to get a cage in which to keep him while he was out on business, for he readily saw that he would be up to all sorts of mischief if left alone and at liberty.

A rap came upon the door of his room.

"Come in!" cried Bob, and in response the door was opened, and in came the proprietor of the hotel, followed by half a dozen others.

"Well, gentlemen?"

"Beg pardon, but they are telling most wonderful stories about your monkey, and we would like to see him," said the proprietor.

"Oh, all right; there he is," said Bob, and they all crowded up near to the bureau where *Muldoon* sat soberly munching a cake and looking as honest as ever.

"Where did you get him?"

"Bought him of an Italian down here."

"But where did he come from?"

"Italy, I suppose."

"What, the monkey?"

"No, the man."

"Oh," replied Bob, looking innocent.

"But where did he get the animal?"

"Somewhere in South America, he said."

"Did he know that it had the power of speech?" asked one curious old fellow.

"I guess not, or he wouldn't have sold him for five dollars."

"Five dollars!" they all exclaimed.

"How did you happen to find it out?"

"Oh, only by accident."

"That is a phenomenal wonder. And does he really talk?"

"It sounds like it, although he does not make his lips move as human beings do. He seems to talk inside himself, so to speak."

"Wonderful!"

"Let us hear him speak."

"Yes, yes; by all means," said they.

"I don't know as he will while he is eating; however, I'll try him. I have named him *Muldoon*, on account of the strong resemblance he bears to that renowned individual."

"Capital!" they all exclaimed, and a general laugh was indulged in.

"I say, *Muldoon*, how do you feel?" asked Bob, of the sober old monk.

"Hungry as blazes!" the monkey seemed to say, at which they all started back with looks of consternation and amazement.

"Wonderful!"

"And evidently truthful," said the landlord, seeing how eagerly *Muldoon* was eating, for, to tell the truth, the Italian had nearly starved him.

"Soy, what's them duffers lookin' at?" he again seemed to say, creating as much astonishment as before.

"These gentlemen are looking at you, *Muldoon*, but you shouldn't call them duffers," replied Bob, reprovingly.

"Well, they arn't got no manners."

"Gracious, he actually talks. Why, young man, you possess the greatest wonder the world has ever known, and without doubt you could sell him to some of our museums or scientific societies for a large sum."

"Certainly. No doubt but that Harvard College would galdly get possession of such a marvel of natural history," said another.

"Oh, but I don't wish to part with him; do I, *Muldoon*, old boy?"

"Nixey; we're goin' ter have fun," replied the monk, and again there was a laugh.

"Well, well, I never expected to live long enough to hear an animal talk," said one.

"I can scarcely believe my ears."

"Wal, they're big enough to believe," replied the monkey; and this raised a louder laugh than ever, for it so happened that the man who said it had fearful big ears, and of course all hands saw the point.

"Well, *Muldoon*, you appear to be a joker as well as a talker."

"Oh, give us a rest!"

"That seems to be a pretty good hint, and I guess we will take it. But would you have any objections to having a couple of Harvard professors examine him?" asked the landlord, turning to go.

"Certainly not."

"Good. I'll send for them right away."

"Wonderful, wonderful," the others kept saying, as they moved reluctantly away.

"Do you intend to exhibit him?"

"Oh, no. I'm a Yankee notion drummer, and shall take him along with me for my own amusement."

"He's too valuable a creature for that."

"Oh, go soak your head!" yelled *Muldoon*, and with more laughter to mingle with the astonishment, they left the room.

"Well," mused Bob, after being left alone, "either that is the biggest crowd of duffers and snides that ever lived, or I'm the boss ventriloquist. Who would believe that men could be fooled so easily—and yet I don't know but that Harry Kennedy might have played it on me, as he used to play it on people with his dog *Bones*, had I not learned his art. Well, I'll have heaps of fun with him at all events."

That night he practiced for a long time with *Muldoon*, not only with ventriloquism, of which the animal of course knew nothing, but he began to train him and learn him tricks, for he had made up his mind that the intelligent creature could be taught to do almost anything but talk, and he could do that for him very well.

As for the monkey, he took a great fancy to Bob, and evidently concluded that he had found in him a first-class friend, as in reality he had. However long the Italian had owned him, it was evident that he never had succeeded in making friends with him, for he starved and abused him, whereas Bob both fed and treated him well.

And it is a fact well known to those who have had the care of monkeys, that they form very strong attachments for those who treat them well, and that they never forget them, while, on the other hand, they never forget an unkindness. In fact, they are almost human in their feelings, whether they are the beings from which the human race sprung or not.

Meanwhile the news spread far and wide about the wonderful talking monkey. Finally it got into the papers, and reporters came to learn more particulars, although, of course, everybody regarded it as a hoax.

But Bob attended to business every day, having bought a cage for *Muldoon*, so as to keep him out of mischief while he was absent, and finding the thing becoming altogether too bothersome, he refused to let anybody in to see it until the Harvard professors came.

If he could only fool them he felt certain that he need have no occasion to fear that any one else would detect the cheat. But a reporter on one of the papers stole a march on him, and after being admitted and hearing *Muldoon* talk, he wrote up a long account of the supposed wonder, and it was published, thus making the excitement greatly extended.

But the next evening the Harvard professors came, and Bob did his best. One of them was a professor of natural history, and after making an examination of the animal, he found that it had no organs of speech in any way differing from those of other monkeys, and

this fact being established, it did not take them long to get at the truth of the matter.

"Why do you say this animal talks?" he asked, turning to Bob.

"I never said so, sir."

"But it has been so reported."

"I am not responsible for that. If people will be fooled against their common-sense, I am not to blame."

"How do you do it?" asked the other professor.

"By the aid of a little ventriloquism," replied Bob, looking as sober as *Muldoon*.

The fooled professors exchanged glances, and then they smiled.

"Very clever indeed, young gentleman, but you have no right to make fools of people."

him three hundred dollars a week to appear for a few minutes on his stage each evening with *Muldoon*, and give a sample of his ventriloquial powers.

But Bob was too modest for that. It was a great temptation, but he had neither the inclination nor the cheek requisite.

From Boston he went to Lowell, and, curiously enough, he found two drummers for rival Yankee Notion houses there, ready to work the town for all it was worth.

But little things like these never discouraged Bob Rollick, and although one of them was the identical fellow that he had cheated out of an order in Connecticut, he jumped right in and swept the city.

Not only did he sell his goods a trifle cheaper than the others did, but the reputation he had made in

So *Muldoon* was fooled into quietude, and even when the man began to shear the hair off of him close to the skin, he seemed to enjoy it, evidently thinking that he was receiving a first-class scratching.

Well, so he was, but it was taking the hair off, and making him look as much like the very Old Nick as possible, and yet all the while he was enjoying it, and probably thinking what a nice friend he had met.

It took the fellow nearly an hour to complete the job, and in that time he shaved every spear of hair from his snoot to the end of his tail, leaving him as bare as a picked chicken or a skinned sheep.

After completing the job he set the poor denuded monkey up on a table, and took a look at him. It was enough to make a pig laugh.

"There, I guess your master won't know you now."



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"Well, sir, I don't charge them anything for it."

"Perhaps not; but it is our duty to expose the fraud," said one.

"Yes, our duty in the interest of science," put in the other.

"Very well, gentlemen, you can do anything you like in the interest of science, but until the fools are all dead I shall be able to have all the fun I want with my art and science."

"No doubt of that, sir," said they, and the two professors left the room, feeling exceedingly big because they had found out the cheat, while Bob felt a trifle foolish to think he had failed in fooling the old roosters.

Their report was eagerly sought for by a crowd of newspaper reporters and others who had gathered at the hotel, feeling certain that they would get at the truth of the matter; and when they reported that it was a cheat and a delusion, and explained that it was only made to seem that the monkey talked on account of its owner being a very clever ventriloquist, there was a shout of laughter raised that made the whole house ring.

But it was a big thing for Bob Rollick, for when people learned how they had been sold they had ten times as much respect for him as they would had he simply been the owner of a monkey that could really talk, and he at once became the hero of the hour.

Indeed, every paper in Boston came out the next day with accounts of the sell that the young New York drummer had played on the people, and the affair was laughed over and talked over for a long time.

It took Bob over a week to finish his business in Boston, but wherever he went he found people ready to shake him by the hand and laugh complimentary to him. In truth, there was so much said about it that a manager of one of the variety theaters there offered

Boston with his monkey had preceded him, and on account of it he was able to sell much more than they could.

"Confound that monkey," said one of them. "On account of that beast, I'll be hanged if he don't take the cake everywhere."

"That's so. We'll have to get monkeys or lose our trade," said the other, sneeringly, for in Lowell Bob had taken *Muldoon* along with him, and had given several little exhibitions at stores where he went for orders.

"I'd like to poison him."

"Well, I wouldn't like to do that. But if you will take Bob to the theater to-night, I will fix his monkey so he will not take him out again right away to help him drum trade."

"How?"

"Never mind. You take him out, and I'll attend to the other matter."

"All right," and so the matter was agreed upon between them.

That evening Bob cheerfully accepted an invitation from his fellow drummer to attend the theater, and after seeing *Muldoon*, he left him lying in a chair and went away.

Now, when the other drummer found the game working all right, he proceeded to Bob's room, and opened the door with a skeleton key which he carried for purposes that may not have been exactly honest, and then fastening it again on the inside, he proceeded to work.

Taking a clipping machine from his pocket, he made love to *Muldoon* by feeding him with cake, and then got still further into his good graces by scratching him.

Now, monkeys love to be scratched as well as a hog does, and they usually have something to scratch for.

At all events, he won't be apt to take you out when he goes drumming. And this will get me partially even for the trick he played on me," he added, and then went from the room, locking the door after him.

Muldoon looked wistfully after him, as though sorry that he was going, but having been "scratched" enough for a time, he concluded to take a nap, and so curled up in a chair for the purpose.

But he felt chilly, and kept getting up and turning around as though to find a warmer place, as you have seen a dog do, but all to no purpose; he could not keep warm enough to compose himself to sleep.

Finally, after trying this for some time, he leaped upon the bureau, as though he hoped to find there a warmer place.

But instead of that his attention was attracted to a most horrible reflection in the mirror.

At first sight he started back and set up a shrill, fierce chattering, and then he jumped down upon the floor and ran several times around the room over and under the bed, in fact, over everything, as though in search of that horrible animal or trying to escape from where it was.

Then he leaped up and took another look. There it was, and when *Muldoon* grinned and chattered, the shadow did the same quite as defiantly.

This made him even wilder than ever, and leaping down again he caught up one of Bob's slippers, and then back again, he began using the heel of it in fighting the supposed horrible object.

In doing this, of course, he battered and smashed the mirror all into bits, and then, thinking he had demolished his tormentor, he sat awhile chattering to himself about his victory, probably.

But still he felt cold, and finally drew himself together as best he could and sat crouched up upon the table, looking even more hideously comical than ever.

It was while in this posture and half asleep that Bob Rollick returned and entered the room.

The sight that met his gaze was enough to make an old dry pump cry.

"What in thunder is the matter with you Muldoon?" he asked, going towards him with a look of great anxiety.

At this the monkey set up a loud chattering and began skipping from place to place, and then up on the bureau, where he pointed to the broken mirror and made even a more wild and diabolical chattering than before.

What the dickens did it mean anyway? What had happened to his monkey in his absence?

"What is the matter, *Mull?*" he asked, but as there was no ventriloquism working at the time, the mon-

But he never gave the racket away. No, no. He was as jovial as ever, and, after finishing up his business there, he went on to Lawrence, while the other two went to Manchester and further north.

Business, however, was very bad, and he did simply nothing there, and but little at Salem or Haverhill. But at New Bedford he found a good opening, and not only did a good business, but had a heap of fun.

As for *Muldoon*, he seemed to reflect upon the indignity that had been worked upon him, and, as it were, to gradually understand that the man he thought to be treating him to a big scratch, had in reality made him look even more hideous than ever.

He could not get used to the clothes that Bob had bought for him, only so far as they made him more comfortable than before. Indeed, he seemed to be

And of course Bob found little or no encouragement there for Yankee notions. Bread and butter and raiment appear to be about all that is sought for, and so he went to several stores without selling enough to get his monkey a breakfast.

Finally, after tramping a long time, he came to the last store where anything in his line was sold.

It was kept by two dead-and-alive old fogies, who would go crazy if they had ten dollars' worth of stock left over. Bob had been posted about them, but was determined to sell them something, if possible, and then shake the dust of the old dead-and-live town from his feet.

"Good-morning, Mr. Grip," said he, as one of the partners approached him.

"My name isn't Grip; my name's Grasp. What do



"Ticket!" persisted the conductor, smiling. "Begorra, but I'm a deadhead!" Bob made Muldoon say, and instantly a sensation was created which brought everybody in the car to their feet.

key's only reply was to point at the smashed mirror and renew his chattering.

"But the mirror didn't skin you in this way. Come here. Let me see what it is," and getting closer he examined him and saw what had happened.

Indeed the hair that lay strewn around on the carpet told the story if nothing else did, but the question was, who did it?

There could be no doubt but that somebody had been in his room during his absence, and had performed this business very finely.

"Poor fellow! Who did it?"

But *Muldoon* in answer caught up the slipper and again began pounding the frame and back of the broken mirror.

"Oh, that is all very fine, but that is only the second mirror you have broken for me to pay for. What ails you anyhow? Upon my word you are a beauty now, aren't you?" and in spite of his indignation at the trick that had been played upon him and his monkey, he could not help laughing at the poor beast as he sat there upon the bureau.

This he kept up for several minutes, when he stopped suddenly.

"I tumble!" said he. "This fellow Buckner has worked this racket on me to get square for the one I played on him, and I'll bet on it. Oh, the dufter. But how did he get into my room? Well, there are various ways of doing it, but I'll never say a word; oh, no, I give him the satisfaction of letting him know that I fell to his snap; but I'll get hunk with him if it takes a million years."

Taking poor *Muldoon*, he wrapped him up in a rug, and put him comfortably to sleep on the floor, and the next day he got a tailor to make him a complete suit of clothes, for the weather was getting cold, and the poor fellow actually needed protection.

reasoning all the while, and to feel that he had been abused.

Bob took good care of him all the while, and was continually learning him tricks; but he did not take him out with him, or exhibit him in any way until he got to New Bedford; and, in the meantime, his hair had begun to grow.

CHAPTER VII.

Yes, it was at New Bedford, Massachusetts, that Bob Rollick took out the monkey *Muldoon* for the first time since he had been so terribly shaved by a rival drummer at Lowell.

Indeed, it would have puzzled almost any person in the world to have told what he was after being clipped to the skin, and, as the weather was beginning to get cold, the poor creature had all he could do to keep warm, even in the suit of clothes which Bob had bought for him to take the place of his hair.

But at New Bedford Bob concluded that he would take him along when he went out with his samples to drum up orders, and, to do this with the least trouble, he cut a few holes in the valise which he carried slung over his shoulder by a strap, and placed the animal comfortably inside of it.

New Bedford used to be quite a place in the days of whale oil, but gas, kerosene, and the electric lights of to-day have thrown a shadow over the old city, in which its inhabitants move cautiously about as though fearful of running against something. Trade and commerce are dull, and if any modern Rip Van Winkle should be looking around for a good locality in which to take a twenty-year snooze, he would undoubtedly find this a place where his long slumber would be wholly undisturbed.

you want?" he asked, somewhat curtly, for he had a suspicion that Bob was a drummer.

"You are one of the firm?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I came to see if I could sell you some Yankee notions."

"No, sir," said he, abruptly.

"I represent the house of Slope, Slimmer & Co., of New York, and I can offer you better bargains than you could get if you visited their store in person," he added, without noticing the man's remark.

"I don't believe it."

"Let me convince you," said Bob, placing his sample valises upon the counter, as also the one containing *Muldoon*.

"No, I won't let you do anything of the sort. We have got everything we want."

"What is it?" asked the other partner, Mr. Grip, coming towards them.

"Nothing, only a Yankee-notion drummer," replied Grasp, contemptuously.

"We don't want anything, young man," said Grip, motioning him away. "We can't sell what we have got already."

"But I can astonish you with some new goods and prices, and you in turn can astonish your customers," said Bob, opening a case of samples.

"We haven't got any customers to surprise," growled Grasp.

"But some fresh goods at low prices would certainly bring you customers."

"No, nobody wants to buy anything but bare necessities in this town."

"Very well; I have got some very fine goods in the line of necessities."

"No, sir, you can't sell us a thing."

"But just take a look at my samples, for that won't cost you anything."

This encouraged them somewhat, and with manifest indifference they looked over his goods.

But they had no idea of buying, and even when Bob mentioned a price on needles which was less than half of what they could be bought for at the manufacturer's—just to coax them on—they wouldn't snap at the bait.

Finally Mr. Grasp noticed a movement of the valise in which Muldoon was confined, and proceeded to watch it suspiciously.

"What have you got in that valise?" he finally asked, pointing to it.

"Oh, I carry live stock in that valise," said Bob.

"Live stock?"

"What sort of live stock?"

"Well, I take the Alderman Muldoon along with me this trip to learn him the business."

"Young man, what are you talking about?"

"Muldoon."

"Who, or what is that?"

"Haven't you ever heard of Muldoon?"

"Can't say that I ever have."

"Let's see what it is, anyway," said the other partner, greatly interested.

"All right," replied Bob; for he had had no fun since he landed in New Bedford, and so he proceeded to open the valise.

Muldoon set up a wild chattering, but presently leaped upon Bob's shoulder, while the two old fogies started back in surprise.

It will be remembered that Muldoon was dressed in a suit of clothes now, a regular full dress, swell suit, together with a plug hat, which made him look exceedingly comical.

"Why, it's a monkey!" they exclaimed.

"No, sir; at least not a regular monkey, are you, Muldoon?"

"No, yer bet I arn't," the animal seemed to say, whereat the merchants started as though a ten-dollar customer had dawned upon them.

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Grip, "does it talk?"

"Didn't you hear it?"

"Gracious goodness, what does it mean?"

"Soy, do yer want ter buy?"

"Mercy on me!"

"It must be an imp of Satan! No, no, we don't want to buy; we don't want any dealings with you," protested Mr. Grasp, and the old rooster looked really alarmed.

"Soy, yer N. G.!"

"What?"

"Yer no good! Come on, Bob, these duffs won't buy a cent's worth," said Muldoon, at the same time cocking his little plug hat over in front.

"Mercy, mercy!"

"Don't be saucy, Muldoon," said Bob.

"They're no good. They're duffs."

"In Heaven's name, where did you get that creature?" asked Mr. Grip.

"Oh, I picked him up on the road."

"And could he talk when you got him?"

"Just as well as he does now."

"What breed is he?"

"The Muldoon breed."

"Where do they come from?"

"The wild interior of Brazil."

"Wonderful—wonderful! Never heard anything like it in my life. Gracious goodness! I am afraid this almost proves that mankind are the descendants of monkeys, as Darwin claims."

"I'd be ashamed if you was my descendant," said Muldoon, promptly.

"It seems to be down on us."

"Well, that's because you won't buy of me. He is the same way with everybody who refuses to patronize his master, aren't you, Mul?"

"I hate mean old suckers any way."

This broke them up badly, and after consulting a moment, they concluded to buy a small bill of goods; and so began to examine them with that object in view, while Muldoon hopped up on a box and quietly watched proceedings.

Bob saw that he had fastened to them at last, and so he just put in his best licks. In spite of their protests, and with the assistance of his monkey, who would put in a pat word every now and then, he sold them quite a large bill of goods, got them to sign the order, and then started to get out of the town.

As for Grip and Grasp, they were completely upset, and after Bob had left their store they appeared undecided as to whether they had been dreaming or whether they had been dealing with an emissary of the Evil One, for they never for an instant tumbled to the fact that Bob's ventriloquism had made it appear to them that the monkey talked.

From New Bedford he went to Taunton, where he did a little business, and then pushed on to Providence. He had learned what other drummers had learned before him—that the merchants around Boston and east of it do not care to deal with New York houses, even if they can get the goods a trifle cheaper, when they can be purchased in Boston, of whose greatness they are jealous and justly proud—so he concluded to make his way West again.

Besides all the fun he had had, he had done even better than a majority of drummers; but that was not enough to satisfy him, for he was ambitious to have fun and make money in big quantities at the same time.

So far as his ventriloquism was concerned, he was continually practicing at it, determined in that, as he was in everything else, to master it before he ceased trying.

Of late he had been practicing on an Irish brogue to use in connection with Muldoon—for, taking his looks into consideration, that was the most appropriate—and ere many days he had perfected himself in it.

But meantime he had kept up his training of the

animal until he had learned him to do many tricks, and even to move his mouth when he said certain words to him, and in this way he managed to make the ventriloquial part of the business seem all the more real; indeed, he spent all his evenings and leisure time at the business, feeding the monkey well, and continually making the friendship between them all the greater.

Those who see monkeys in menageries or museums, or those who accompany Italian hand-organ players, know little or nothing of what can be done with these intelligent beasts when kindness and skill is patiently brought to bear upon them. In museums and public places where they are exhibited no attempt is ever made to train them, but they are left to cut up the antics most natural to them; while the Italian organ-grinders, with instincts nearly as low, and twice as brutal, never think of training them to do anything beyond looking for or begging for pennies, and further than that they are abused and starved; therefore it is not to be supposed that more than a little is known of what they are capable of.

Well, Bob took the cars for Providence, Rhode Island, one of the brightest, go-ahead cities in New England, and here he calculated to do a good stroke of business.

He took Muldoon into the car in the cage-like valise in which he usually carried him, and finding a vacant seat near the center of it, he let him out and gave him the half of the aforesaid seat next to the window.

Dressed as he was in his swell suit and plug hat, and looking so much like one of the Muldoon family, it is not to be wondered at that he created much excitement and attracted attention from all the other passengers.

But there he sat, looking as sober as a deacon, scarcely glancing at those who crowded around, and never looking up unless Bob spoke to him, and so speculation ran high as to what he was for; whether his owner was in the show business, or whether he had a hand-organ in the baggage-car and took his monkey along with him for safe keeping. And yet he didn't look the least bit in the world like a hand-organ player, and so they speculated.

Directly in front of Bob sat a ministerial looking sort of a rooster, and by his side a fine looking young lady, on whom he seemed desirous of making a favorable impression. He was about thirty years of age, but by the big language he used, he appeared to wish to have it believed by the young lady and everybody else within the sound of his voice that he knew quite as much, if not more, than ordinary men did who had reached four score and ten.

Bob spotted him, of course—as he did everybody whom he met, although at first he had no thought of having any fun with him, any more than he did with the old woman who occupied a seat behind him.

Taking out his order book he began to busy himself with its figures, while the gun in front of him commenced to talk about the absurdity of having a monkey occupy a seat in a passenger car, although the young lady in his company had a pug dog in her lap.

Bob heard her tell him not to say anything to the conductor, as he had threatened to do, lest he should also object to her purp, and then she added that she thought the monkey was just too cunningly utter for anything, and she wished that she owned him.

"Oh, yes, tolerably cunning, but I think there is a vast difference between the quality of a dog and a monkey. However, I will not protest if you desire it," said he, smiling.

"Why, Mr. Soapstone, I thought you belonged to the advanced school; to the Darwinites, who regard apes and monkeys as the connecting links between man and beast; in fact, as belonging to a much higher grade than canines do," said she, archly.

"Oh, dear, no, nothing of the sort."

"Well, I am in favor of that belief."

"Dear me, Miss Waxly, you don't tell me so!" said he, starting a little.

"I certainly belong to the school of advanced thinkers, and believe that Darwin has the right theory of evolution. Look at that monkey," said she, turning around, as he did also. "Why, I have seen many men who did not look more intelligent than he does."

"True, but he is only a beast. He lacks the organs of speech, and therefore is but an animal."

Just then the conductor came through the car to take up the tickets.

Arriving at the seat occupied by Bob and Muldoon, he took up Bob's ticket, and, being a good-natured man, he looked at Muldoon in a comical, quizzical sort of a way, and holding out his hand, said:

"Ticket!"

Muldoon looked up and showed his teeth, while Bob smiled at the proposition, and the other passengers in the immediate vicinity looked on with grinning interest.

"Ticket," persisted the conductor, smiling.

"Begorra, but I'm a deadhead!" Bob made Muldoon say, and instantly a sensation was created which brought everybody in the car to their feet.

"A what?" asked the conductor, who was nearly as much surprised as anybody in the car, although he suspected some trick.

"A deadhead," he replied, in strong Irish brogue.

"Oh, you are, eh?"

"I am."

"Merciful Heavens!" exclaimed several, notably the old lady who sat behind Bob, while the ministerial rooster turned white and said nothing.

"Have you a pass?"

"I have."

"Where is it?"

"Monkeys don't count."

This produced a laugh from several, although the majority of those who had crowded around looked wild and swallowed quick. They were simply paralyzed at the strangeness of the affair.

"Oh, monkeys don't count, eh?"

"Cert."

"Well, I should smile," the amused and astonished conductor remarked. "What do you call it, young fellow?"

"It! That is Mr. Muldoon, if you please," said Bob, looking angry.

"Oh, it is, eh?"

"Hello, spoons!" said Muldoon, looking at the clerical rooster, who had turned around and was staring in amazement at him.

At this the man started and blushed like a red dandel night-cap, and the others roared with laughter.

"So it appears that he, she, or it can talk very well, after all," said the young lady.

"It is simply a miracle! perfectly astounding! It must be a human dwarf or something," he replied, and she laughed merrily at his confusion.

By this time everybody in the car who could do so had crowded around the locality, while the report of a "talking monkey" spread from mouth to mouth.

Muldoon happened to look up at Bob in an inquiring sort of way, as much as though he would ask what everybody was looking at, when he took advantage of the movement and made him ask:

"What'er these snoozers looking at?"

"They are looking at you, Muldoon."

"Wonder if they see anything green?"

"Only something queer, I guess."

"Luck at him!"

"At who?"

"At his nibs making love ter ther gurl," he seemed to reply, and again there was a laugh at the old chap's expense.

"Lord have massy upon us!" exclaimed the old lady in the seat behind Bob. Up to this time she had sat speechless amazement.

"There's another crank!" said Muldoon.

"What sort of a critter is that now, I'd like to know. Say, youngster," she added, poking Bob in the back "what is it, anyhow?"

"An Irish monkey, ma'am," replied Bob, respectfully.

"An Irish monkey!" she exclaimed. "I never hearn tell of such a critter."

"Don't you catch on to his brogue?"

"Lordy massy, but it talks."

"Oh, yes; fairly well."

"How on arth did it learn?"

"I learned him, ma'am; but you see I can't cure him of his brogue."

"Wal, I swan tu man! Wonders will never cease. That's what I allus told Parson Poker; I allus told him, I did, that the age of miracles hadn't passed, by a jupful. But if I go home an' tell him how I heard a monkey tork, he'll say I'm crazy or a witch."

"So yeas are that!"

"What!" exclaimed the old woman, straightening up suddenly.

"Muldoon, you must not be impertinent," said Bob reprovingly.

"She's a crank."

"Hush!"

"You'd better make him hush, or I'll bang him over the head with my umbrella, the saucy Irish ape!" snapped the old woman.

"I will apologize for him, ma'am. You see he don't know any better than to speak the truth, let it come bit or miss," said Bob, and although this was not what might be called an apology, she took it for one, and let her feathers fall.

"Luck at him snuggle up ter her!" cried Muldoon, in a high key, and again there went up a shout of laughter at the expense of the clerical rooster, and instantly both he and the young lady blushed deeply and sat farther apart.

It was more fun for her, however, than it was for him, for she laughed with her blushes, while he scowled and looked out of the window.

"Say, youngster, if I war you, I'd larn that little heathen some manners," put in the old woman at this juncture.

"Hear ther ould hin cacklin'!"

"Be quiet, Muldoon, or I shall put you in the bag again."

"Ther sassy critter! Callin' me an old hen!" she muttered, savagely.

"Luck! He's givin' her more taffy!" he cried, when the man in front of him began talking to the young lady again, and being unable to stand it any longer, they got up and changed seats amid loud and prolonged laughter.

CHAPTER VIII.

By this time the train had nearly reached Providence, but the interest in Bob Rollick and his talking monkey did not in the least subside. Indeed, the wonder and talk of it went in a short time from end to end of the train, and hundreds went through the car just to see Muldoon, who still occupied a seat by the side of his master.

Bob gradually became tired of answering questions and making his monkey talk, to satisfy the curiosity of people, and although Muldoon of course knew nothing of all that had been going on, he appeared to feel sleepy, and to want to lay off for a rest.

But still the curiosity he had excited was not so easily put down, and almost in spite of himself he was obliged to keep at it, paying himself, however, with fun wherever he could get a chance to work it in.

When within a few miles of Providence the car door opened, and a young, good-looking man entered and approached the group that stood around Bob, who was still putting Muldoon through the sprouts.

Watching and listening for a few moments, he approached nearer, and finally stood close to Bob's seat.

"Hello, Muldoon, how you was?" he finally asked, in a cheery, pleasant tone of voice.

"I'm bully; how are ye, Mistor Kennedy?" the monkey seemed to say, and instantly at the mention of the name, Bob leaped to his feet.

"How are you, young fellow?" said Harry Kennedy, for it was the renowned ventriloquist, frankly extending his hand to Bob, who stood gazing at him in wonder.

"How—how do you do?" he stammered, accepting the proffered hand. "Of course I have no need to be told again that you are Harry Kennedy."

"Certainly not."

"You have introduced yourself."

"No, Muldoon introduced us," said Harry, laughing while the others looked on in wonder.

"And of course you tumbled at once to the racket," said Bob, aside to him.

"Yes, I heard some people talking about it in the car ahead, and thought I would take it in," he replied.

"Bob took Muldoon in his lap and made room for Mr. Kennedy in the seat.

"Where did you catch on to the business?"

"From reading one of your books."

"Well, well! I am glad to hear you say that, for so few ever understand the matter as I explain it, and yet it is impossible to put it differently. How long did it take you?"

"Oh, I studied over it for a long time until I hit upon the key, and then I had no difficulty whatever."

"Good."

"I have had a heap of fun with this monk, and when we get to Providence, I will show you how good a pupil I am of yours."

"Thanks, I am going to show a week at Providence, and we can become better acquainted. But from what I have seen and heard, I judge you are quite as good as I am, eh, Muldoon?"

"Begorra, but he's a daisy!" the monkey seemed to reply, although people might have noticed that the brogue was somewhat different, although as yet they had not tumbled to the circus.

"So he is, Mr. Muldoon, and I am glad you have fallen into such good hands. Can you sing?"

"Sure, I can hum a bit."

"Hum, eh? Well, what can you hum?" asked the clever ventriloquist, and, of course, Bob was delighted, as were those who stood around taking in the strange business.

"Faix, I can hum 'Paddy Whack.'"

"Paddy Whack, eh? Well, it has been a long time since I heard that lively old Irish tune. Suppose you give us a taste of it?" said he, and while Bob held the animal in his lap, he seemed to sing with strong Irish twang

"Och, I'm Paddy Whack
From Valdeewack,
Not long ago turned soldier;
None will deny,
Nather will I,
That there is any boulder.

Wid my rub-e-dub-dub,
An' my filly-lu-lu;
Och, ye girls, I'll charm ye;
I'll dance an' sing
Like onything,
Since now I'm in the army."

So perfect an imitation was it, so capital a piece of deception, that it provoked roars of laughter and applause. Indeed, Mr. Kennedy never made a greater hit on the stage in his life.

But before the applause, wonder, and general excitement had subsided, the train rolled into the depot at Providence and a rush was made to get out, that evidently being the only thing that would break up such an interested gathering.

Bob placed Muldoon back into his cage, and in a few minutes he and Harry Kennedy met on the platform outside, where they arranged to go to the same hotel together.

It was a great event in his life, and he was surprised to find him such a genial, unpretending gentleman, the man who has the reputation of being the best living ventriloquist.

And Mr. Kennedy was also greatly interested in the handsome young fellow who displayed so much smartness in his own profession, for the art is one that only a few can acquire, even with the help of books.

At the hotel Bob showed him what he could do in the various imitations, and whenever he was at fault the professional ventriloquist corrected him, until he was enabled to do things almost as well as he could, which of course made him so thankful that he could not find words to express himself.

That evening he attended the performance given by the San Francisco Minstrels, with whom Harry Kennedy was performing, passing a very enjoyable time, but on account of nothing so much as that part of the entertainment given by his friend and preceptor.

The next day he left Muldoon at home in the hotel, and went out to drum up some business, not having accomplished much since leaving Boston. But he had not been out long before he learned that the two rival drummers whom he had come in contact with at Lowell were also there, so he just went in heavy, underselling them in many lines of goods, and making it even warmer for them than he had done on other occasions when they had run together.

And they also were not long in finding out that Bob was in the city, and that night they resolved to pay him a visit at his hotel.

They inquired for him at the office, and one of the attendants showed them up to his room.

"Hello, Bob Rollick!" said one of them, as he opened the door in response to the rap.

"How are you, gentlemen? Walk in," said Bob, frankly.

But the moment they entered the room, Muldoon, who was sitting on a table eating his supper, began a wild chattering, and leaped quickly from one point to another. First he was on top of the head-board of the bed, then on the mantle-piece, all the while keeping up his fierce screaming.

"What is the matter with the monk?" asked one of the drummers.

"Been drinking, hasn't he?" said the other.

But as they spoke, Muldoon leaped from the bureau and landed squarely on the head of one of them, the one who had shaved him at Lowell.

Once landed upon the frightened drummer, he began to claw and bite him, while the man yelled murder, and tried to escape him.

Bob flew to the rescue, and finally succeeded in choking the animal off, after which he thrust him into his cage.

"Good Lord! that fiend came near murdering me. What is the matter with him?"

"Hanged if I know, but I'll ask him," said Bob, who concluded, however, that he did know.

"Ask him!" they both exclaimed, looking at their young rival, in wonder.

"Yes, I say, Muldoon, is this the man that shaved your hair off at Lowell?"

"Yes, that's the sucker. Lemme at him!" the monkey seemed to exclaim; and as he was rattling about in his cage it helped the delusion wonderfully.

"Holy Moses!"

"Thunder and blazes!" exclaimed first one and then the other, and then, without stopping to exchange another word, they skipped out of that room as fast as their legs would carry them.

"Come back here!" yelled Bob after them.

But none of it in theirs. They had seen all they wanted to, for if it had come to that—that a monkey could talk, and not only talk, but tell the truth—they concluded that they had got enough, and so kept on out of reach.

Bob enjoyed a good laugh over their fright and discomfiture, after which he let Muldoon out of his cage and allowed him to finish his supper. He was all right again after the man had left, and became as quiet as usual.

This is really a phase of a monkey's nature. They will remember an injury and try to resent it almost as long as a human being.

Of course he did not know at the time that an indignity was being practiced upon him; he seemed rather to think that he was being treated to a first-class scratch. But when he saw himself in the glass, and felt cold on account of the loss of his hair, he seemed to reason that the man had committed an outrage upon him, and to remember it against him. Hence the biting and clawing that he had given him in revenge.

Bob told Harry Kennedy of the affair the next day, and together they had a good laugh over it, and it did seem as though the monkey was almost half human—indeed, the two drummers concluded, evidently, that he was all human.

Kennedy advised him to take up with his gift and make a profession of it.

"No," replied Bob, laughing; "I had an offer to go on in Boston and show with Muldoon, but I didn't have the cheek."

"What! a drummer, and lacking cheek?" exclaimed Kennedy.

"Well, I lack the kind that it requires to go upon the stage, as you do."

"Oh, I guess you will get over your bashfulness in you keep on in your business for a few years, and I shall expect to see you on the stage before long, a full-fledged ventriloquist."

Bob laughed, and, shaking hands, they parted, for he had finished his business in Providence before the week was up, and as their paths for the future lay in almost opposite directions, they separated with the best of feelings and wishes for each other's success in life.

From Providence—where he had sold quite a large bill of goods—Bob went to Newport, a bright, thriving little city, but where he did not expect to do much business, owing to its being the dull season of the year, calculating to take the boat from there to New York.

Contrary to his expectations, however, he did first-rate in "the city by the sea," besides having quite considerable fun with Muldoon, and at the end of the second day he started for New York with a book full of orders taken there and at Providence.

There was quite a crowd of passengers on the boat, the larger proportion of whom had come by train from Boston and the east, but Bob had no difficulty in procuring a state-room for himself and Muldoon.

It was a delightful evening, and the sail down the river to the sea was a most enjoyable one to all on board.

A large number of the passengers were gathered on the after promenade deck enjoying the cool evening air and the beautiful scenery which greeted the eye from either shore.

Bob took a seat there, having left his pet in the state-room, and for quite a while was lost in thought and contemplation. He was mentally reviewing the fun he had enjoyed and the amount of business he had done in the few weeks he had been out upon the road on this, his first drumming excursion.

To tell the truth, he was just a trifle home-sick, as I think the majority of New Yorkers are after having been away from home a while. There is no place like home, especially to one whose home is in New York, and Bob felt it as keenly as anybody. He wanted to see the boys and his benefactress, Miss Gnarley, and revel awhile in the boss city before going out again on a drumming expedition.

While musing thus an old countryman and his wife came along and took seats quite near him, and, al-

though this might never have attracted his particular attention, their queer conversation very soon did.

They were evidently from the back interior of somewhere, and this was undoubtedly their first steamboat trip, consequently they were somewhat nervous.

"Moses, I—I don't like this ere jar an' soun' of the boat," said the wife, looking anxiously around.

"Oh, it's nothin', I guess; the other folks don't seem to be skeered much," said he.

"Skeered! Why, I s'pose they're all New Yorkers and Bosting people, an' they aren't scared of nothin', I've hearn tell. They all get their lives insured, an' don't care a darn."

"Oh, I guess it's all right," he replied, soothingly.

"But if we'd er only gone in the railroad keers we'd er—"

"Maybe they'd been smashed up or run off the track or somethin'."

"Wal, we shouldn't have been drowned at all events. There! what was that?" she asked, as the pilot struck the engineer's gong for him to slow up in turning a point.

"Guess nothin' much."

"Oh, no; everything's all right with you. I say, young man, what did that bell ring for?" she asked, turning to Bob.

"For the engineer to slow up, mum."

"Slow up! What's that?"

"Well, the river is very dangerous here and the pilot has to pick his way among the rocks," said Bob, puffing at his cigar.

"Dangerous!" they both exclaimed.

"How dangerous?" she added.

"Oh, they don't *always* sink a boat here, but they have to be very careful."

"There, Moses Bunker, didn't I tell you? But you will always have your own way. You would have it that there was no danger. But I s'pose it's because you can swim an' I can't, an' p'raps you had the widow Billings in your mind," she snarled.

"Do be quiet, Hannah."

"Oh, yes, be quiet an' get drowned!"

"I won't. I'll scream the moment this ere steam-boat strikes anything."

Moses made no reply to this, but he evidently knew that she would do it. Finally he addressed Bob.

"Say, does she go out to sea?"

"Who?"

"Why, the steamboat, to be sure."

"Oh, not a great ways."

"Wal, how far?" asked the wife, anxiously.

"Not more than forty or fifty miles. But there is no real danger after we pass Point Judith."

"Fifty miles out to sea! Moses, what did I tell you?" she demanded. "I'm goin' to sit up on this ere roof all night, an' if the boat goes down, I shall just cling to you an' no mistake. I'll just keep the widow Billings in my mind, and don't you forget it."

"All right. Who cares?"

"Wal, I wouldn't like to say right out afore strangers that you care, but I can enjoy the thought myself all the same."

Moses made no reply, and just then the supper gong rang, and they both leaped to their feet in great affright, never having heard such a thing before in their lives.

"What's that?" they both asked of Bob.

"That's the bell for prayer-meeting," replied he, with the utmost calmness.

"Prayer-meeting?"

"You don't say so! What for?"

"Well, whenever the boat gets into a particularly dangerous place, the captain orders a prayer-meeting in the lower cabin for safety."

Gracious me! Come on, Moses; you are proper hefty at that; come," said she, earnestly.

"Young man, is that really so?"

"Certainly. Go right down with the crowd and you'll find it in full blast by this time," said Bob, pointing to the crowd that was by this time surging down to the dining cabin.

"But aren't you goin', young man?"

"No; I've got a cork jacket, and I'm all right," replied Bob, leaning back in his chair and blowing a cloud of smoke.

"Oh, gracious goodness! hurry up, Moses, or you'll never get a chance to get in a word," said she, catching hold of and pulling him along.

Bob laughed heartily for a moment, and then followed at a respectful distance, being in search of a square meal himself, and at the same time thinking he would have a chance to see the result of the racket he had started.

The country couple crowded anxiously along, evidently being determined to reach the meeting in time to get in a few words.

"What's the matter with you, old man?" asked a passenger whom he was crowding on the stairs leading down to the cabin.

"Oh, you let him alone; he's rated the best exhorter in our parts, and if anybody can save us from going down, he can," said his wife.

"Well, I don't want to save you from going down, only I don't want you to go down these stairs on top of me," replied the passenger.

"Do you think there's any danger?" she asked, of another young man.

"No; if you brace right in you'll get there," said the young man, laughing.

"You shouldn't make light of serious things like this," said she, protestingly, while edging her way along down.

"Oh, there's no hurry," protested another.

"No hurry! We might go down!"

"Yes, if we would only behave ourselves and not crowd and push like a pack of hogs," said still another, a lady on whose dress the old woman had stepped.

This restrained her somewhat, but she most likely

thought it a queer way to go to a prayer meeting in such an emergency.

But before she had half time to collect her thoughts they reached the palatial and brilliantly-illuminated, grand dining-cabin, and a colored waiter hurried them to a couple of waiting seats. There they sat in a most bewildered manner, looking anxiously around for indications of a prayer meeting.

Finally a waiter placed a bill of fare before each of them, and recovering a little and most likely thinking it had something to do with the services—the catalogue of hymns perhaps—they began to look them over.

"I don't see 'Rock of Ages' or 'Old Hundred' on the tract," said she.

"I say, Hannah, this aren't no prayer meeting," said

eating and flashing their jewels in the refulgent light. It almost paralyzed the old couple out of their appetites.

"Moses, did you ever?" asked the wife.

"Hannah, I never," he replied, with a sigh.

"Did you ever see such putty things? Look at them dishes an' lamps an' flowers, and only see how them wimmin's dressed!"

"Gosh, an' what nice things to eat. Why, a feller could make himself sick here jus' as well as not; but I say, Hannah, that young chap up there on the roof of the boat didn't make much by foolin' us down here to this big feed, did he?"

"No, but I wonder if there really is any danger?" she asked, looking around.

"But that's a confounded swindle."

"Besides, we arn't eaten half a dollar's worth yet," she protested.

"Very well, you may keep on eating as long as you like after you pay. Jump right in and get your money's worth."

"Oh, Moses—I say, Mister, how much will it be if we stop now?" she asked.

"One dollar each."

"Gosh all beeswax! Just as much for a little as it is for all you want, hey?"

"The very same. Hurry up, please."

"Moses, it's awful. I know it is, but you pay it, an' then if we don't make this table sick, my name aren't Hannah Bunker."

Moses groaned from away down deep, and then



Muldoon leaped from the bureau and landed squarely on the head of one of them, the one who had shaved him at Lowell. Once landed upon the frightened drummer, he began to claw and bite him, while the man yelled murder, and tried to escape him.

ne, at length, seeing the dishes of food being brought on.

"Hush! maybe this is some new-fangled religion that we don't know nothing about. Don't move till we see what the others do."

"Nonsense, this is supper."

"Do you think so?"

"Of course it is, an' that young chap must have been a lyin' tu us up there on the roof."

Then the waiter bustled along, asking what they would have, and this confused them all the more, but, thinking this was thrown in with the price of the fare, they braced up and ordered pork and beans and corned beef and cabbage, those being about the only dishes they could make out upon the Frenchy bill of fare.

They went for those substantials, never seeing the collector who had begun his rounds, or Bob Rollick who sat opposite further up the table.

CHAPTER IX.

THE old country couple whom Bob Rollick had frightened into the belief that the supper gong on board the steamer *Old Colony* was a call for a prayer-meeting in the dining-cabin on account of the imminent danger the boat was in, finally concluded that they had been fooled, and went for their pork and beans and the corned beef and cabbage, all the time supposing that the dinner was a part of the arrangement.

Bob was taking the whole thing in along with his own grub, and waiting with a grin on his face to see what the result would be when the purser came to collect a dollar each from them for their refreshments.

The scene was a most gorgeous one, and the long tables were filled with a brilliant company, all chatting,

"No. Don't you see that nobody's scared, only for fear they won't get all they want to eat," said he.

"It does look a little that way, Moses; but hurry up with your beans, I want to get at some of that pie, an' puddin', an' cake, and ice cream. I tasted some of it once at a picnic, an' I tell you, Moses, it's proper nice. Du hurry up."

Moses mumbled something with his mouth full of beans, while his wife was busy reaching out in every direction for things she could reach, and calling on those sitting near to pass her what she could not harpoon herself.

Moses finally got outside of his beans, not at all pleased to think he had at first ordered that homely dish when there were so many nicer looking ones around, although he knew the names of only a few of them.

Just then the purser reached them.

"Supper—please, one dollar each," said he.

"What!" they both exclaimed, dropping their knives and forks, and looking up at him aghast.

"One dollar each—please."

"Why, we paid our fare at Bosting," said the old man.

"I dare say, but now you want to pay one dollar each for your dinners."

"Great gosh!"

"Oh, Moses!"

"Hurry up, please," said the collector, but to save his life he could not help smiling his face into wrinkles, as did Bob and the other diners when they saw the expression on their phizes.

"One dollar a piece for this?"

"One dollar."

"Why, we thort as how it was thrown in," said Hannah.

"Well, you can throw it in if you prefer getting outside of it in that way," said the purser.

went away down deep for his old greasy calf-skin. After undoing three or four of its straps and whispering to his wife to keep her eye on the purser and everybody else while he was getting at his money, he proceeded carefully to pick out a two-dollar bill, which he first held up to the light, then rubbed between his thumb and finger several times, to make sure that there were not two bills by some means or other stuck together, and then with another sigh of remorse, as though he was parting with a double tooth, he handed it reluctantly to the grinning official.

"That's what I call downright robbery," he muttered, and then closed upon and again strapped up his old wallet.

"That's so, but now sail right in, Moses, an' we'll get our money's worth," said she, at the same time scooping the half of a dish of lobster salad into her plate and giving the other half to her husband.

"Yu' bet we will, Hannah," said he, and then he swooped down upon a dish of chicken salad.

They went for everything they could reach or get passed to them, keeping their plates well loaded, and all sorts of things mixed up together.

They were the observed of all observers at that table, but they heeded it not; their object was to get their money's worth, if it killed them.

Several—Bob Rollick, among others—after they had finished eating, watched the eager couple, who seemed determined to eat the steamboat short of provisions.

But they finally weakened, long after everybody else had done so, topping off on ice-cream, and with an effort they struggled up the companion-way, leaving the waiters gazing after them in astonishment.

Bob was not far away, he assured, and he followed them to the after-deck again. But it was now so dark that faces could not be distinguished. Groups of men and women were seated there, enjoying the evening

air—some of them smoking, others chatting; but there was a subdued feeling to be observed that always exists where the company is mixed and strange.

By this time the steamboat had got out into the ocean and headed towards Long Island Sound, through which she had to plow her way onward to New York, her destination.

There had been quite a severe storm the day before, and there was rather a heavy swell on, which caused the boat to rock considerably, although not in an alarming manner.

But the motion was too much for the old couple, who came out of the lighted cabin into the darkness of the after-deck, and the first thing that Hannah did was to lose her sea legs and to topple over upon a spoony

her feet, only to topple over again into her chair, nearly smashing it.

A laugh from the other passengers was her only reply.

"Do be quiet, Hannah; somebody's pokin' fun at yu," whispered her husband.

"Oh, Moses, I don't feel well," she moaned, and those about her knew that the motion of the boat was making her sea-sick; although only a few of them knew about the terrible supper she had just eaten to get her money's worth.

"Wal, Hannah, I don't feel just well myself, but we shall get ashore soon. It's the plaguey boat, that's makin' us feel so," he added.

"I wonder if she's goin' to be unsteady like this, all

"Dear me! but somebody order, for I'm sure we shall all go to eternity this very night."

"Wal, I don't care much."

"Oh, Moses, how dare yu fly into the face of Providence?"

"I wish I was on a Providence dock—that's what I wish."

"Moses, I fear yu're losin' yur piety. Only think of a class-leader sayin' that!"

"I—oh!—I aren't losin' my piety, and don't think I shall, unless it's in my stomach; but I feel just as though I war goin' ter lose my supper," said he, with punctuating grunts and groans.

"Don't du it, Moses! Only think how much it cost! Kinder nerve yerself, Moses!"

"I can't, Hannah—I feel it risin'," he moaned, plac-



The watchman threw himself against the door and burst it open. A big fat man leaped out of his bunk and stood there before them. "What in thunder do you want?" he cried, going for a revolver that lay under his pillow.

couple, knocking them over and creating a momentary panic.

"Oh, oh, Moses! she's bust, or somethin'; where be yu, Moses?" she cried.

"Here I be; what's the matter?" he answered.

"Confound you, you old elephant; can't you see where you are going?" demanded the young man, assisting his terrified lady to her feet.

"What has happened, Hannah?"

"Oh, she's all goin' tu pieces, I know she is," moaned Hannah, getting up with his assistance and clinging to him for support.

"No she been't—she's only a little wabby. I—?" but Moses didn't finish his observations, for just then the boat gave another lurch and over they went towards the port side, striking a couple of chairs and crushing them like wicker-work.

This only increased the panic, but Bob and two or three others assisted them to their feet and got them into chairs near the railing.

"There is no danger, madam," said one of the passengers, trying to reassure her.

"Oh, there must be; see how she goes!"

"That is nothing, only the rocking of the boat as she plunges over the swells that are coming in from the ocean. Compose yourself."

"Yes, Hannah, compose yourself. Don't yu see no-body else arn't scared?" said Moses.

"Oh, but bimeby she'll go down, I know she will. Why don't they have a prayer meetin'?" she asked, whereat everybody on the deck laughed. "Oh, you're a miserable lot of sinners, and I wouldn't wonder if this was a judgment du yu."

"Do be quiet, Hannah."

"Look out!" cried Bob, close to her, but managing his voice so that it sounded directly behind her near the rail.

"Mercy on us, what's that?" she asked, starting to

the way to New York? Oh, Moses, if we had only gone on the keers!"

Then they relapsed into silence for a few moments, and everybody else settled down; although there were heard occasional laughs from persons sitting there in the darkness, showing conclusively that they were still commenting upon Hannah.

By nine o'clock the breeze had freshened somewhat, and, getting near Point Judith, the roughest part of the course always, the grand old boat began to pitch considerably.

Indeed, several of the passengers retired to the cabin, which, being nearer the waist of the boat, was not so much affected by the motion of the waves.

Bob was quietly smoking, and really enjoying the sensation; although all the while waiting for and expecting more comical demonstrations from Mr. and Mrs. Bunker.

But he did not have to wait long. The increased motion of the steamer's bow as she glided gracefully and swiftly over the waters lying between the windy point and Block Island, began to cause them genuine alarm. They had been very quiet for some time, owing to peculiar sensations in their stomachs, but actual fear was now fast possessing them.

She was moaning at intervals, and he would echo about every other groan.

"Oh, Moses, I know we shall sink," she whined.

"I don't care if we do," said he, faintly, for recklessness came over him just in proportion to the seasickness as it does with everybody.

"Oh, Moses!"

"Oh, Hannah!"

"Sing a hymn, or somethin', won't yu?" she asked, pathetically.

"No; I—I don't feel like it," he replied, in a tone full of despair.

ing his hand upon his stomach, and looking the picture of woe.

"Don't tork that way, Moses; yu make me feel that way tu—oh!" she added; and it was very evident that they would soon part with the magnificent supper they had partaken of.

The freshening breeze and the motion of the boat had driven nearly all of the passengers into the cabin, or to their state-rooms, but Mr. and Mrs. Bunker manifested no disposition to leave their anchorage. Indeed, they did not dare to do so for fear of pitching overboard.

"Oh, Hannah, I feel it!"

"What?"

"It's bound to go."

"Oh! ah—wa—hoc! I—I—"

She finished by giving up her dollar's worth of supper to the fishes of the sea, during which she groaned piteously and wished herself dead.

Moses, on the other hand, tried to walk to the other side of the boat, for a like performance, but being thrown from his feet by the toss of a wave, he gathered himself together on all fours and slowly made his way to the guard.

He, also, contributed his dollar's worth or more to the funny tribe, after which he fell back into a chair, evidently not caring a straw whether the boat went to the bottom or not.

Hannah, meanwhile, had lain down upon the guard-seat, where she groaned and called upon her senseless and indifferent husband to come and take his last farewell of her.

But he didn't want any farewell; he didn't care a snap whether he ever saw her again or not. Seasickness and the loss of that big supper had completely paralyzed him.

"Oh, shut up!" was all the answer he made to her, and then all was silent again for a time, save the

groans which they would both occasionally give vent to.

Bob was enjoying the fun, and he tried once or twice to arouse them with a little ventriloquism, but it was no go. They cared for nothing only to be let alone and die just as they were.

"Wake up, old man!" said he, shaking the sea-sick Moses; "she is going down!"

"Let her go!" was his muttered reply.

"Do you want to go ashore?" he asked Hannah.

"No; lemme be!" she groaned.

Finding there was no more fun to be had out of them, Bob lighted another cigar and once more resumed his seat, leaving the unfortunate old couple to recover at their leisure. The bracing sea air would certainly do them good; but the fun, and all prospect of it, had been driven out of them completely.

In half an hour or so the boat became more quiet, and was gliding like a thing of life through the waters of Long Island Sound.

Gradually Moses and Hannah recovered themselves somewhat, and with the assistance of one of the deck watchmen managed to get down to the cabin and into their berths; but still, oh! how sick they were!

Bob did not like the idea of being left alone on the deck, and as a chilly fog had by this time settled down, he concluded to go into the state-room cabin to see if there was any more fun to be had, and if not, he would go to bed for the night.

He walked the whole length of it, back and forth, in search of sport, as he always was, and finally spotted a young couple, who were evidently too nervous to go to bed, as many people are who are unused to sea voyages.

Taking a seat near them he leisurely pulled a paper from his pocket and apparently began to read; but he was all the while listening to the conversation which the couple carried on in an undertone, and which soon convinced him that it was the lady who refused to retire.

"Now, Mellissie, you may as well come to bed; there is no danger," he pleaded.

"No, no; Seth, I'm afraid," she replied.

"What in the world are you afraid of?"

"Well, I might get sea-sick."

"No, you won't. People never get sea-sick when they lie down."

"But there might come up a dreadful storm or something."

"Oh, no; it is a lovely night."

"Or the boat might catch fire."

"No, no."

"Or run into something."

"Nonsense, Mellissie."

"Or somebody might break into our room and rob or murder us. Hark!" she cried, suddenly springing up.

Bob Rollick had caught on with his ventriloquism by that time.

"What was it?"

"I heard something in this state-room," said she, listening eagerly.

"Somebody snoring?"

"No, no; somebody groaning."

"Got the nightmare perhaps."

"Well, I heard something, anyway."

"I dare say. Probably somebody talking in their sleep. Come, everybody almost has gone to bed, and we ought to have some sleep."

"No. I could not sleep, Seth, if I did go. Hark!"

"Oh, you are getting so nervous. That is nothing out somebody snoring or talking in their sleep. Come, let us go in and lie down," he pleaded in a kindly tone.

"Oh, Seth, I don't dare to. Let us remain here all night, and then we shall be ready and all dressed if anything happens."

"But we can lie down in our bunks with our clothes on, and then be ready all the same."

"Hark! Did you hear that?" she asked, grasping his arm nervously.

Seth listened, for then he *did* hear something.

"Murder! murder! mur—" came in smothered tones from the state-room that before had attracted their attention.

They both leaped to their feet, as did Bob, who also pretended to be alarmed.

"Help! help! help!" again was heard, as though some person was being smothered.

"There is murder being done in there!" cried the woman, now thoroughly alarmed.

"It does sound as though something was wrong," said Seth, and he grasped the knob of the door, only to find it securely locked on the inside.

"Help! help!" sounded faintly again.

"Where is the watchman?" asked Bob.

"Ah! here he comes. Here, watchman, there is something going on in here wrong," said Seth, clasping the waist of his wife.

"Do break open the door," said she.

"What is it?" asked the watchman, calmly.

"Listen!"

"Murder! help!" came most appealingly from what seemed to be the inside of the state-room.

The watchman knocked heavily upon the door and rattled the knob.

"Who is there?" came from within.

"Open the door."

"What for?"

"I want to come in."

"You—who are you?"

"An officer of the boat."

"What do you want?"

"I want to see what is going on in there."

"You go to the deuce," a surly voice returned, and without attempting to do so, or to wait for further instructions, the watchman threw himself against the door and burst it open.

A big fat man leaped out of his bunk and stood there before them.

"What in thunder do you want?" he cried, going for a revolver that lay under his pillow.

"What is going on in here?" asked the watchman.

"What do you mean by that?"

"We heard cries of murder in here?"

"You did? What have you been drinking?"

"Nothing. We all heard it."

"Bah! I am alone here. Get out. You are either dreaming or I must have been talking in my sleep. Don't bother me any more, or I shall be liable to handle this thing carelessly," said he, pointing to his revolver.

So completely rebuked, the watchman allowed him to close the door again; and then, to satisfy himself, he listened at the doors on either side of it. But there was nothing more suspicious than snoring heard, and he finally continued his rounds, leaving Bob reading his paper and the frightened couple clinging to each other closer than ever.

"Oh, I am sure he must have murdered some poor creature and flung the body from the window," she whispered; "and the idea of going to bed under such circumstances cannot be entertained for a moment. We will pass the night here," she added, leading the way to a richly upholstered divan.

Bob left them, one supporting the other, and retired to his own state-room, there to have a good laugh and to fall sweetly asleep without a fear but that daylight would find him again in his beloved New York.

CHAPTER X.

SURE enough, when Bob Rollick awoke the next morning the steamboat lay in her berth, and many of the passengers had already gone ashore, including the nervous young couple who had been frightened into sitting up all night by Bob's ventriloquial act.

But as he walked down the broad stairway, who should he see but Moses and Hannah Bunker, with whom he had had so much fun the night before. They were the most woe-begone looking couple that ever landed in New York, for the terrible sea-sickness they had suffered from, on account of the big supper they had eaten in order to get their two dollars' worth, had played them completely out.

Glad enough were they when they found the boat tied up, and the moment they set foot on solid ground they actually brightened up and smiled a little, but they were no sooner on shore than the hack and cabmen went for them, and as they scarcely knew where they were going, of course it made them all the more confused.

"Hack?"

"Cab?"

"Coach?"

"Take you anywhere."

"First-class carriage."

"Come right this way."

"Have a coupe?"

"Right this way to the best hack in New York."

"Take you cheap."

"Have a nice ride?"

"Take you right up wherever you want to go," and fifty other shouts assailed their ears.

"We don't want to go anywhere," said Moses, pushing his way along; but again they went for him.

One of them tried to relieve him of his old gripsack, while coaxing him to ride with him, while another caught hold of Hannah's handbox and insinuated that he would give her the finest ride in New York for the least money.

"Lemme be!" she snarled.

"Let go that are valise! I tell yu we don't want to ride in yu're old go-carts," protested Moses, yanking away from the man.

"Where do you want to go?" asked a policeman, approaching them.

"Who be yu?"

"I am a policeman."

"Look out, Moses, that's one of the chaps that clubs people to death!" cried Hannah.

"Where do you wish to go to?"

"We are goin' to see my son."

"Where does he live?"

"Darned if I know—somewhere on Sixth avenue, I believe," replied Moses.

"Don't you know the number?"

"Wal, I did, but these fellers have knocked it out of my head."

"What is his name?"

"George Bunker."

"That's all right. Here, this man will take you there," said the policeman, indicating one of the hackmen.

"But can't we walk?"

"No, it would take you all day."

"Right this way," said the driver. "I will look in the directory and find out where your son lives," and before they could resist much they were hurried towards one of the carriages.

"Look out, mister; that man carried a small-pox patient to the hospital yesterday!" yelled one of the other drivers, at which both Moses and Hannah broke away and ran as though their lives depended upon it, while a perfect shout of laughter followed.

"Oh, Moses, let's git out of this orful place as quick as possible, or they'll be the death on us; come!" she cried, pulling him along.

"Yes, yes, let's git away. I've hearn tell 'bout this ere York, but I'll be hanged if it arn't ten times wuss'n I thort for."

They started up the wharf towards West street, but three or four of the mischievous drivers continued to follow them and try to get them into their carriages.

"Clear out, I tell yu; we don't want to ride," protested Moses.

"You'll get lost if you attempt to walk."

"Darned if I care, if we can only get away from yu

chaps. Come, Hannah," and in spite of all this guy-ing and bantering, the country couple succeeded in getting away from them and reaching West street.

But here they were only out of the fat into the fire, for at that hour the street was crowded with all sorts of vehicles, and it was almost as much as a native's life was worth to get across it, let alone a countryman.

Car-drivers were wrangling and swapping oaths and compliments with truckmen and pedestrians, while policemen were trying in vain to straighten out the usual snarl, and to a stranger, especially, it seemed like pandemonium indeed, as it seemed to Moses and Hannah.

They tried, dodging this way and that, to get across the street, but each time got driven back again. In fact, they became panic-stricken after awhile, and then Moses, seeing what he thought was another opening, made a dive for it, followed by his wife, but although he succeeded after much labor in getting across to the opposite curb-stone, she got frightened and returned again.

This was an awful mishap, for the street was so blocked and jammed that neither could see the other from where they stood, and instantly they began to call to each other, attracting attention of course, while he again dove into the snarl and attempted to fight his way back to his partner.

Hannah, in the meantime, believing that her husband had been swallowed up and that she should never see him again, attracted the attention of a policeman, who managed to get her across the street.

But by this time Moses was back again to where he had started from, and of course became greatly alarmed at not finding Hannah.

Bob Rollick was standing there watching their frantic efforts, but in his excitement he failed to recognize him, but went on calling for his lost Hannah.

"She's gone off in that car," said Bob, pointing to one that was tearing down the street.

"Thunder an' blazes, she'll get lost!" he exclaimed, and without waiting an instant he began to run after the car, yelling at the conductor and swinging his old gripsack in the air in the wildest manner.

But that conductor had been detained so long by the "block" that he had no notion of stopping for anybody, knowing that there were other cars close behind.

Moses was not to be balked, however, for dodging this way and that through the muddy street, he finally overhauled the car, and boarded it.

"Whew! is Hannah Bunker here?" he called, poking his head in at the door.

"Who and what do you want?" asked the astonished conductor.

"I want my Hannah; where is she?"

"Do you see her?"

"No, but a chap up here told me she was on board of this ere keer."

"A mistake, I guess."

"Oh, Lord, where is Hannah Bunker?" he moaned, and then jumped off the car.

The result was that Moses was landed nearly two blocks away from where his wife was waiting him with tearful impatience, and it was nearly an hour before they succeeded in effecting a junction.

And then they wandered off in search of Sixth avenue, spending at least an hour before an obliging policeman put them upon a car, and gave the conductor directions where to put them off.

What became of them Bob never knew, but after having a large amount of fun with them, he started for his boarding-house.

Here he met with a warm reception and a hearty welcome home from his travels, and after providing breakfast for Muldoon, he left him in his cage and started down town for the store, taking with him his sample trunks for the purpose of getting a new lot of samples, and he hoped, permission to go upon another route, not being much in love with the Eastern one.

The reception he met with by his employers and fellow-salesmen was even more hearty than he had received at home, Slope, Slimmer & Co. being well satisfied with what he had done while out on the road, and so they told him to lay off for a week, during which time he was to get his sample trunks ready to start out on the Middle District—that is, to take in the Middle States.

And, strange as it may seem, no one about the store appeared more delighted at seeing Bob than Larry McShiner, the porter whom he had always been playing rackets on.

"How have yees been ther while?" he asked, when he got a chance to speak to Bob.

"Oh, first-rate. How have you been yourself, Larry?"

"Faix, I've been lonesome."

"Lonesome?"

"Sure we all miss yer divilment here; so we do," replied Larry, honestly.

"What! you know I never do anything of that kind," replied Bob.

"Yer don't?"

"Certainly not."

"Wal, then, it somehow doesn't happen when yees arn't here."

"Oh, you are dreaming, Larry," replied Bob, turning and walking to another part of the store, leaving the porter looking after him.

"Dramin', is it?" and with a quiet chuckle he went about his work.

Bob spent a portion of the day at the store, and then went to pay a visit to Miss Gnarly, his kind old maid benefactress, who was delighted to see him, of course. Indeed, had he really been her son she could not have been more pleased in welcoming him home.

"Oh, Robert, how you grow!" she exclaimed.

"Do you think so?" he asked.

"Yes, Robert, you do. Come and kiss me, for you must never grow too big for that."

Bob met her half way, and gave her a rousing old kiss; for all she was homely as sin, he knew that she was good, and had always been a friend to him ever since their first meeting when he was a poor boot-black.

And even outside of this he was smart enough to know which side his bread was buttered on. He knew that she was a rich old maid, old enough to be his mother, but that she had no relations very near, and that when she made her will he would probably get a nice slice.

But although he had quietly indulged in this hope, which might at some future day enable him to start business for himself, he was not prepared for the proposition that she made him that evening as they sat at dinner.

It was nothing less than this. She had gone to considerable expense in employing detectives to aid her in getting some trace of Bob's parents or relatives, but having utterly failed to do so, she now proposed to legally adopt him as her son and make him the heir of her large wealth.

Naturally enough Bob was greatly taken aback at this, although heartily appreciating the great boon she proposed to bestow upon him.

"Miss Gnarly, I don't believe I am worthy of being your adopted son," said he, at length.

"Oh, yes, you are, Robert. I love you as dearly as though you were my own flesh and blood. Indeed, you are the only person on earth that I do love, and I think you love me in return."

"How could I help it, after what you have so kindly done for me? And yet I cannot help thinking and feeling that I did not honor your kindness and generosity as I should have done," said Bob, thoughtfully.

"Oh, well, you are naturally wild, but not naturally bad. You will sober down one of these days and become a merchant, for I do not propose to take you from the calling you are now in, unless you prefer to go back to school again. Indeed, I have talked with your firm during your absence, and their opinion is that you had better keep on and learn the business completely. But what do you say?"

"Do you really think me worthy?"

"Yes, you handsome fellow, I do; and if you consent to it I will have my lawyer draw up the papers at once," said she, earnestly.

"Well, if you think it best, I will comply, for you are the only friend I have in the world."

"And after that you must call me mother," said the good old maid, who was evidently somewhat soured to think that fortune had served her so mean a trick as not to make her a mother in deed and in fact.

"With all my heart, although it is a term that I never made use of in my life."

"But you shall do so now, and this must thereafter be your home. Of course I should much rather have you with me all the time, but as you have entered upon a career of mercantile life, perhaps it is better that you master it, and after you do so I will buy you an interest in the business with Slope, Slimmer & Co."

"That would be splendid, but it does not seem as though I deserve such good fortune."

"Yes, you do, and even better, Robert. Now you must come here to dinner to-morrow, and by that time I will have everything arranged."

"Very well," said Bob, and shaking her two hands warmly and kissing her, he hurried away, so full of delight that he could scarcely contain himself as he walked along.

"Oh, maybe not!" he ejaculated. "Perhaps I haven't tumbled upon a pudding! How is that for high up? Whew! I wonder if, after all, I am dreaming, and shall presently wake up and find it only a tubful of smoke? Wonder if I hadn't best bump my head against a lamp-post and see whether I am asleep or not?" and he actually did stop by the side of one, and, taking off his hat, bumped his forehead against it two or three times. "That seems to be all right. Guess the old lady means it. But, to make sure that I am not even dreaming that my head was tried on the lamp-post, I wish I could meet one of the gang somewhere."

Walking across to the Hoffman House, who should he encounter but his fellow-clerks, Bill Dump and George Slush?

"Hello, Bob! you are just the fellow we were hoping to meet," said Bill.

"And I was just wishing that I could meet somebody that I knew. Feel of my pulse," said Bob, holding out his hand.

Bill took hold of his wrist.

"Regular. Why?"

"Well, I didn't know but that I was in some sort of a dream. Come in and have a cigar," he added.

"What has happened you, Bob?" asked George.

"Well, not much, only I've been adopted."

"Adopted!"

"Or am to be to-morrow."

"By whom? Found a girl?"

"Yes, the old gal."

"Who?"

"Miss Gnarly."

"Oh, I remember about her. Well?"

"She is going to adopt me."

"What! As her son?"

"Cert. How high is that, boys?"

"Away up. Then, of course, you will leave us?"

"Oh, no, not much," replied Bob.

"I have heard that she was sweet on you, but this is clear honey?"

"And she'll make you her heir, of course?"

"That's her racket, she says."

"Bully for you, and bully for her! She must be all wool and a yard wide."

"Of course she is."

"Shake!" said they both, and shake they did.

After passing a pleasant evening Bob returned home,

but not to sleep. The great good fortune that was about to be his made him so sleepless that morning came upon his unclosed eyes, and found him building the largest kind of air castles and indulging in bright dreams of the future.

Perhaps Miss Gnarly would rather have married than adopted him as her son, boy though he was, but she probably thought that it was best to secure the handsome young fellow as her adopted son and heir rather than run the risk of losing him altogether when he grew older, for, to tell the truth, she did love him more than she had ever loved any human being.

The next day Bob told the members of his firm about what he had consented to do with the rich old maid, and from them he received the warmest and heartiest congratulations, they knowing all about how rich she was.

"Now, Bob, brace right up, and in a year or two we will take you into the concern if you like," said Mr. Slope, shaking his hand.

"Nothing could please me more, sir," replied Bob.

"But you must learn the business from top to bottom first; and on this circuit which we are going to send you out on now you will have a chance to get acquainted with an entirely new kind of business, as we are going to let you take out a different line of goods."

"Thank you," said Bob, and in a few minutes he was down-stairs where Larry and one or two of the clerks were at work.

Going to where Larry was opening a box of goods with a malet and jimmy, he proceeded to have some fun with him by employing his ventriloquial powers.

"Oh! oh!" a person seemed to cry from the interior of the box he was at work upon, and Larry dropped his tools and started back in alarm, for it will be remembered that this was the first time that Bob had ever tried his art at the store.

"Mother av Moses, fut's that?" he exclaimed, very pale and looking at Bob, with protruding eyeballs.

"What's the matter?" coolly asked Bob.

"Didn't ye hear it?"

"I heard nothing. You must have them on you."

Larry reflected a moment, and then thinking that perhaps it might be all imagination after all, he picked up his tools and again began to pry off the cover of the box of goods.

"Oh! oh! Stop it!" again came from the interior.

"Murder an' nouns!" exclaimed Larry, and this time dropping his tools he ran up-stairs and told the superintendent that there was a man in the box he was opening, which of course brought several of the employees to the spot.

Bob was all the while at work selecting his samples from the shelves near by, and seemingly knowing nothing of what was going on.

"What do you mean?" demanded the superintendent.

"There's a man in that box, sure, for he spake ter me twice as I wur lifting the cover," said Larry.

"Nonsense," said the boss, and catching hold of the cover he attempted to rip it off.

"Oh! oh! Be careful, will you?" came from the box.

"Does yees hear that, sur?" asked Larry, very pale.

"What can be the meaning of this?" asked the superintendent, himself slightly agast.

"There's a man in the box as sure as snakes."

"It cannot be," replied the boss, while the clerks crowded around.

Finally he gathered up courage and pulled the cover from the box with a savage rip. But of course there was nothing unusual found in it, and then their wonder grew alarmingly.

"What do you make of this, gentlemen?" he asked, turning to the salesmen.

But they all shook their heads and looked from one to the other in curious alarm.

"Oh! it was all imagination," said the foreman, turning away. "Open the other one, Larry."

"Sure, the loikes av that was never known before," mused Larry, as he proceeded to open the other box.

But he had only partially pried off one of the boards composing the cover before there seemed to come from the inside of the box the squealing of a pig, partially smothered with something.

"Howly Mother!" exclaimed Larry, again dropping his tools, but never stopping this time until he had reached up-stairs and felt himself well out of reach.

CHAPTER XI.

It took some time to argue Larry out of his belief that there was a pig in the box that he had been set to open, and it was not until the superintendent of the store threatened to discharge him if he didn't stop drinking to such a degree as to imagine things, that he concluded that it must be all his fault, and so returned to his duties.

But Bob Rollick was out of the way by this time, and so of course there were no more strange sounds heard, and the porter had no further trouble, although it had the effect of making him swear off entirely. "Niver a drap again," he muttered.

That evening Bob went to Miss Gnarly's house, as per agreement, and there, before lawyers and witnesses, became her adopted son and heir, and the following day he was to take up his home under her roof, although he was to continue in the drumming business and learn the Yankee notion trade from first to last.

It was a great event in Bob's life—in fact, the very greatest so far, and although he was always full of the mischief, he did not fail to appreciate the whole thing, and more than ever to regard Miss Gnarly as his friend and benefactor.

His adopted mother's household consisted only of herself and three servants, one of whom was a coach-

man who had long been in her employ, as the others had been, for that matter.

Great was their wonder when she took Bob the next day and introduced him to them as her son. They could scarcely understand it at all.

"How is it, Bridget?" asked the chambermaid.

"How is fut?"

"How is it that she has a son, when she niver married?"

"Sure, that's aisy," said the cook.

"How is it aisy?"

"Troth, ther law gav'im ter her."

"But why didn't ther law give her a husband at ther same toime?"

"Oh, but yer a greenhorn! But he's a nice lookin' fellow, so he is."

"An' fut's he goin' ter do here?" asked Mike, the coachman.

"He's goin' ter live here, sure."

"An' be ther boss?"

"I suppose so."

"Faix, he'll not boss me."

"Ah, don't ruinate yer prospects, Mike, for don't ye sa how swate she is on him."

"Begorra, but I've a notion that he's a lad," said the table-girl.

"Av cowerse he's a lad. Sure, he's not a gal, I'm thinkin'."

"Indade, yer roight, for last noight he was afther givin' me ther wink while I was waitin' on them at table."

"Is that so?" exclaimed the chambermaid.

"Yees may bet it is. He's young, but I guess he knows a good lookin' girl when he sees wan."

"But did he take you for a good lookin' girl?" asked the coachman, who had by this time grown jealous, being in love with the girl himself.

"He did, an' why not? Der yer think that livin' in ther same house wid you destroys me chances altergether? Sure, he's wan av ther handsomest young men I ever knowd, an' it's glad I am that he's come inter ther family, for sure there was sad made of a handsome chap about ther place."

"But yer'll very soon get sat down on if yer cut up ony av yer monkey-shines with that youngster," replied the coachman.

"Don't yer be so sure about that, Mr. Mike Maloney. He's a darlint, der yer moind?"

Mike made no reply, but he kept up a big thinking, the burden of which was that he wished Bob Rollick was under the sea.

That day he moved his things to his new home, including his pet, Muldoon, for whose especial benefit he had a large cage made in the back yard.

Of course his advent created considerable excitement in the household and among the servants, but when he brought Muldoon there was additional wonder and considerable laughter, although, of course, being Bob's pet, Miss Gnarley welcomed Muldoon without a word.

"It's a monkey," said the cook.

"Yes, an' doesn't he look lolke Mike?" asked the table-girl, winking.

"Aren't yees very smart?" snarled the coachman.

"Indade I am."

"Der yer think yer mightn't fall in love wid ther monkey as well as ther master?"

"Sure I niver loved a monkey yet, an' that's ther rason you an' I cud never hitch."

"Aren't yees very smart?" sneered Mike, as they all stood watching Bob, who was making it as comfortable as he could for Muldoon.

A little later they learned what the monkey's name was, and seeing how very appropriate it was, they were obliged to laugh, as everybody else did.

Mike, the coachman, stood watching Bob at his work, when, after he had got him fixed just to his liking, he was paralyzed at hearing the following conversation:

"Well, Muldoon, how do you like this?" asked Bob, cheerfully.

"This is just bully. This is high baked apple with the cores taken out," replied Muldoon.

"Struck a pretty soft snap, haven't you?"

"Just a pudding, Bob. How do you like it?"

"Oh, tip top. I can't complain."

"Say, who's that Mick standing there?"

"Oh, that is the coachman. He is the man who will take us out to drive."

"Sure, I think he's related to me."

"What makes you think so?"

"Doesn't he look like me?"

"Well, a trifle, perhaps."

"Only he's the biggest."

"Oh, well, you have got a chance to grow yet," replied Bob, laughing.

"Well, if I don't grow better looking than he is, I'll shoot myself."

"Hush, Muldoon. You should not express yourself quite so loudly."

"Fut is that, anyway?" asked the coachman.

"That is a monkey."

"A monkey! But it spakes."

"Oh, yes; he's one of the talking kind."

"I shud say so. Where did you get him?"

"Bought him."

"Did he always spake?"

"Just the same as he does now."

"Isn't it wonderful?"

"Well, a trifle out of the ordinary run of monks."

"Yer may well say that. An' so yees are ther new boss here, eh?"

"Oh, no; I'm no boss. My adopted mother is the boss yet. I'm only one of the family."

"I'd fire out that Mick if I was the boss."

"Be quiet, Muldoon."

"Look at the terrier!"

"Be quiet, I tell you!"

"Troth, but he's impudent enough."
 "But you must not notice him. Of course you cannot expect as much from him as from a human being."
 "Sure, but he's funny."
 "Yes, and you must learn to take all he says in fun," said Bob, and just then the cook and table-girl joined them.
 "What's his name?" asked the table-girl, Mary.
 "Muldoon," replied Bob, at which the girl laughed heartily.
 "An' don't he look just loike our Mike here?"
 "Oh, yer very smart, aren't yer?"
 "She's right; he's ther image av me," Muldoon seemed to say, whereat the two servant girls cried out in their astonishment and fright.

never bear to have her speak in favor of any other man, old or young.

"Av coorse I am. I'm too smart for the loikes av you ter catch. Sure, yer only jealous because there's a handsome man in the house."

"But there's somethin' very strange about that monkey av his, an' I'm going ter ax ther praste about it," said the cook, shaking her head. "Sure there's divilment in it when ye hear a baste talk, an' ye know it."

"Rolight yees are, Mrs. Mullaly, an' I'm sure it bodes us no good that he's come here," replied the coachman, who was broken up more than he was willing to confess.

Bob remained at his new home for a week or more,

inquiringly, while she stood close behind him, the very picture of anxiety.

"Shure, there's nothin' ther mather with that burrd," said he, finally.

"Touch it, Mike—touch it," she whispered; and he proceeded to do so without result.

"There's nothin' at all ther mather."

"Cut off his head, shure."

"So I will," and siezing the knife, he severed the head at a blow.

The cook seemed all broken up, and looked on in astonishment.

"Mrs. Mullaly," said Mike, stepping back a few paces and looking at her, "it is me candid opinion that ther trouble's wid yerself, an' not wid ther burrd."

"Fut do yees mane?"



"Thunder an' blazes, she'll get lost!" he exclaimed, and without waiting an instant he began to run after the car, yelling at the conductor and swinging his old gripsack in the air in the wildest manner.

"Begorra, it spakes!" exclaimed the cook.
 "Av coorse it does," replied Mike.
 "An' that makes it all the more loike yees."
 "Och, but it's ther divil, an' no mistake."
 "Oh, no, only a talking monkey," said Bob, carelessly.

"Oh, oh, oh!" the girls exclaimed and ran into the house, fixed in their belief that they had seen Satan or one of his imps.

Of course it was not long before the story reached Miss Gnarly about how her adopted son had a talking monkey, but she was too sensible to take any stock in such a yarn, although, of course, she was bound to ask Bob about it, and she did.

Bob then explained to her how he had lately learned the art of ventriloquism, and the harmless deception he had played upon so many people by making it appear that the monkey could talk.

This satisfied her, and after he had given her a few specimens of what he could do in that line, she complimented him highly. Indeed, she was exceedingly proud of him, and did not attempt to conceal the fact.

But the thought of having a talking monkey in the house was too much for the servants, and nothing could seemingly convince them that it was not diabolical.

"Oim sure it's an imp av the divil," said the cook, while they were conversing that evening.

"Troth, I think there's no more divil in it than in the lad himself," said the coachman.

"I wonder fut makes Miss Gnarly so swate on him?" asked the chamber-girl.

"Sure, an' isn't he good lookin'?" asked the table-girl. "She cud niver marry a good-lookin' bhoys, an' so she adopted one. Faith, I wudn't moind adoptin' him myself, so I wudn't."

"Yer very smart, aren't yer?" said Mike, who could

during which he had a heap of fun with the servants, and especially with the cook and coachman.

One day the cook took a turkey and placed it on the table preparatory to dressing and preparing it for the oven.

Bob saw a chance for some fun, and at once that dead turkey began to "gobble," or seemed to do so, at which the cook started in alarm.

"Howly mother! Fut's that?" she exclaimed.

"What?" asked Bob, innocently.

"Didn't ye hear ther turkey muttherin'?"

"No; the idea of a dead turkey's muttering. What should he mutter about?"

"Sure, I must be dramin'," she mused.

"I guess you are."

After reflecting a moment she evidently concluded that she had imagined she heard the turkey "muttering," as she called it, and so, taking the butcher-knife, she seized the bird, whipped it over upon its back with an ugly thud, and started to cut off its head.

"Gobble, gobble, gobble!" sounded again, and this time she started and ran from the kitchen as though the evil one was after her.

Bob also went up-stairs, for he felt that he must either laugh or burst.

As for the cook, she ran to the stable, where the coachman was, and asked him to go back with her to the kitchen.

"What's ailin' ye?"

"Come in an' take away that turkey; it's nor good, it's spakin' ter me it was."

"Bridget Mullaly, are yees crazy?"

"I don't nor, but if I didn't hear that dead turkey spake, may I niver gor ter heaven."

"What botherment is this?" growled Mike, as he started for the kitchen.

Arriving there, he looked at the turkey for a moment

"An' it's best that ther mistress don't catch yees at it."

"At fut—what are yees sayin'?"

"Mrs. Mullaly," he replied, speaking with much solemnity, "it's me humble opinion that if yees didn't mix so much gin wid yer worruk, ye'd get on bether an' not hear so many strange noises."

"Bad luck ter yees! Do yees mane to say that I drink gin?" she demanded, hotly.

"Troth, I'm not sure whether it's gin or whisky."

"Bad manners ter yez, ye dirty spalpeen!" she yelled; and seizing the rolling-pin, she flew at him, and came within an inch of giving him a hot one alongside of the head as he darted out of the door.

Well, this was only a specimen of the rackets that Bob started there in his new and elegant home. Indeed, he seemed to bewitch the entire household, with the exception of his adopted mother, for whom he entertained too much genuine respect to annoy.

But at the end of ten days from the time of his return to New York he got his sample trunks together again and started on his new route west, taking Muldoon along with him.

This he did for two reasons. In the first place he wanted him for company and the fun he was always able to have with him, and in the second place he knew that the servants had taken such a violent dislike to him, evidently believing that he was a very imp of darkness, that they would only not take proper care of him during his absence, but indeed might poison him.

The first place he stopped at was Albany, having had a heap of fun all the way up on the boat, and putting up at the Delevan House, he at once proceeded to business, leaving his companion in his room.

Having had a good resting spell, he went right into the business with a vim, and at the close of his first

day in that city he had the pleasure of sending back to his employers a good fat order for goods.

Also, the next day he did pretty well, but on the morning of the third he took the cars for Troy to see what luck would attend him there.

As for Muldoon he was well fed and taken care of, and consequently was as happy as he could be, without taking any part in the way of drumming.

Returning to his hotel that first night in Troy, he found that the chambermaid had neglected to put a towel in his room, and it vexed him a trifle.

Placing Muldoon upon the washstand facing the door, he rang the bell for the chambermaid, resolved on having some fun with her to pay her for her carelessness.

He had scarcely got Muldoon into an upright posi-

"Why, that pet monkey of mine," said Bob, pointing to Muldoon, who by this time was standing on the bureau.

The clerk took a look and then burst into a loud laugh.

"Here, Mary, don't you know a monkey from a man?" he asked, turning to the girl, who was peeping in at the open door.

"But it spake ter me, sure,"

"What nonsense! The idea of a monkey speaking."

"Troth, I'd take me oath av it."

"Well, I'll take my oath that if you neglect to put towels in the rooms, I'll spake to you and tell you to look for another situation."

"Thank yer, sur," replied the girl as she turned and walked away.

loath to do so on account of his suspicion of people, and New York drummers in particular.

Bob was in the bar-room, smoking and reading a New York morning paper, when the old chap approached him, the landlord having previously pointed him out.

"Young man, my name's Hiram How; I'm from Tioga county," said he.

"Ah! Glad to see you, sir; how are you, Mr. How?" asked Bob, springing up and holding out his hand, for at first he thought he had a customer.

"What is your name?"

"Bob Rollick, representing Slope, Shimmer & Co., New York. What can I do for you, sir?"

"You are a drummer, I believe?" said Mr. How, after a moment's hesitation.



"Say, yer didn't bring me any towel," Muldoon seemed to exclaim, and that girl yelled. She yelled murder and ran down stairs as fast as her legs could carry her, and wildly into the office.

tion when a rap came upon the door, and Bob stepped behind a wardrobe out of sight, saying "come in" as he did so.

"Say, yer didn't bring me any towel," Muldoon seemed to exclaim, and that girl yelled.

She yelled murder and ran down stairs as fast as her legs could carry her, and wildly into the office.

"What's the matter?" asked the clerk.

"Och, sure, but who's in No. 10?" she finally got breath to ask.

"No. 10? Why, Bob Rollick, New York. Why? What's the matter with him?"

"Is he a little bit of a man, about so hoigh?" she asked, lifting her hand about fifteen inches from the floor.

"No, certainly not. He's a fine looking fellow, about as large as I am."

"Och, murther, but the man I seen up in No. 10 was standin' on the washstand."

"On the washstand?"

"So he was. He rang the bell, an' when I went in, he says ter me, says he, 'Soy, yer didn't bring me any towel,' an' then I ran for me loif."

"But hadn't you furnished the room with towels?" demanded the clerk.

"Troth, I think I forgot 'em."

"Well, you had no business to do so."

"Sure, a towel wud be big enough for a bed-spread for ther loikes av him."

"I don't understand what you are trying to get at. Give me some towels and I will take them up myself," said the clerk.

The girl obeyed instructions and followed the clerk up to No. 10, where he rapped, and Bob opened the door.

"Here are some towels."

"Thank you."

"What was it that frightened the girl so?"

"I apologize for the girl's neglect, and it shall not happen again."

"All right," replied Bob, and the clerk took his leave, without suspecting for a moment that there was any trick.

And so he enjoyed one more good laugh on account of Muldoon.

His next stopping place was at Rochester, where he found the city crowded on account of some sort of a convention that was being held there, and the best hotel accommodation he could find there was to occupy with a stranger a double-bedded room.

Bob didn't care a snap, but this stranger evidently did, and manifested considerable nervousness when informed by the landlord that he would be obliged to sleep in the same room with a New York drummer.

"I have been told that they are a hard lot," said he, "and I'm a stranger, you know."

"Well, I have met a great many drummers in my life, and always found them to be very nice men, and as for this one, he is as bright and lively a youth as I ever saw. There, there he stands over by the cigar case," he added, pointing to Bob.

"And actually smoking a cigar!" exclaimed the old country deacon, holding up his hands.

"Oh, well, if there wasn't anything worse done than that we might be thankful," replied the landlord, turning away.

The stranger eyed Bob a moment and then approached him.

"Yes, sir."

"I'm sorry you smoke."

"Indeed?" and then he knew he had a crank to deal with, whatever he wanted.

"Yes, we have got to occupy the same room together to-night, and—"

"Oh, so you're my pard, hey?"

"Your pard, sir! What do you mean, young man?" he demanded, amazed at Bob's calm flippancy.

"We are to blend our snores together on this occasion, eh? Well, I guess I can stand it if you can."

"You amaze me, sir."

"Don't know why I should. I'm not afraid of sleeping in the same room with you if we are strangers. I've slept with all sorts of animals, and never got frightened. Do you shake the room much when you snore?"

"Young man, I do not snore."

"Well, that's all right. But mind you, I don't care if you do, so long as you don't shake me out of bed."

"Young man, I am astonished at your flippancy. As I said before, I am Hiram How."

"Exactly; and as I said before, how do you do, Mr. How?"

"I am very well," said he, soberly.

"That's good; I'm enjoying very good health myself," replied Bob.

"But, sir, what I was on the point of speaking to you about is this: I'm not used to sleeping with strangers."

"You are not going to sleep with one, are you?"

"Well, I find that I am obliged to sleep in the same room with one, but I'm very particular about such things."

"So am I."

"Sleep is a solemn thing anyhow."

"Yes, if you have bad dreams."

"With or without them. It's a dreadful solemn thing

CHAPTER XII.

We left Bob in Rochester, where there was a crowd of people attending a convention, on account of which he was obliged to occupy a double-bedded room in company with an old fellow from one of the backwoods districts, said old fellow being exceedingly

to lie down and close your eyes in sleep, not knowing but that the Lord may call us, and we never be allowed to look on the light of time again."

"Yes, very risky, especially if you have no insurance on your life."

"Oh, young man, I fear that your early education has been sadly neglected. Did you ever attend Sunday-school?"

"Me? Used to run one myself when I was a young fellow."

"Young fellow! What do you call yourself now, I'd like to know?"

"A Yankee notion drummer."

"Ah! I feel that you are a wild and wayward youth, and I know I shan't close my eyes in sleep to-night. I wish I could swap beds with somebody so that I could get a nice Christian room-mate."

"Well, it is rather rough on you, that's a fact. Swap with the landlord."

"Gracious goodness!" and the countryman looked at Bob in utter amazement.

"But I guess we shall get on all right. I'm a nice, clean young fellow, and don't carry creepers of any kind with me; don't snore; don't swear in my sleep; don't have fits and yell murder, and, in fact, am a tolerably good sort of a chap, if I ain't pious."

"Oh, what a pity that you are not," said the old fellow, rolling up his eyes.

"Yes, if I was only such a nice man as you are, what a big thing it would be for me and my friends."

"Oh, why won't you turn while 'tis time?"

Bob consulted his watch.

"Yes, it is time, and I'll turn—in," said he, starting towards the stairs.

The stranger looked after him, but it was with many regrets that he soon afterwards followed.

Bob in the meantime had gotten into bed, leaving the gas burning for the benefit of his room-mate. *Muldoon* was asleep on one of the trunks, curled up like a cat.

The stranger looked carefully around and under his bed after he had locked the door, then he said his little "now I lay me." But the idea of undressing in front of a stranger was too much for him, and after carefully folding his coat and vest and placing them under his pillow, he removed his boots, and then tried his best to *blow* out the gas.

Bob watched him for a moment, hardly able to keep from laughing out loud.

"Pears to me this lamp blows out awfully hard," he muttered.

"Turn down the wick."

"Wick!—why, I don't see any wick," said he, looking attentively at the burner.

"See that little stop-cock on the under side?"

"This thing?"

"Yes. Well, just turn that around, and down goes the wick."

"Oh!" he exclaimed, as the light suddenly became extinguished.

"That's all right."

"How dark it is," he muttered, groping his way towards his bed, into which he finally got. "Do you think we are perfectly safe here?"

"I guess so. Why?"

"Well, I don't know. I never traveled around much, but I've heard say that people were in danger all the time."

"Oh, you won't mind that after you get used to it," replied Bob.

"Used to what?"

"Being robbed and burned out and smashed up on railroads. Of course you won't."

"No, but I don't intend to get used to it. I'm going straight home as soon as I get through with this conference. But do you think there is any danger of being robbed?"

"Oh, I don't know: how are you heeled?"

"How am I what?"

"Got a gun under your pillow?"

"No, of course not."

"I always sleep with mine, and if I hear anybody fooling around the room during the night, I just open on them," said Bob, carelessly, as though it was a matter of every day occurrence.

"Heavens and earth! Why, say, suppose you should hear me up in the night for something?" he asked, evidently alarmed.

"Well, if I wasn't certain that it was you, I should open fire in the direction of the noise which aroused me."

"Oh, Lord!" he groaned.

"But in case you get up for anything you can yell 'Bob' to let me know it is all right."

"Oh, this is dreadful! I know I shall not sleep a wink to-night."

"That would be ever so foolish, pop, for you'll have to pay just as much for lying awake as for getting a good square sleep."

"But I'm nervous, awful."

"Why didn't you sling in a glass of beer before you came up? That would have kept you quiet."

"I—I never drink anything at all."

"Gracious! I should think you'd all dry up and blow away if you don't drink anything at all."

"Only water and sich."

"Well, beer's made out of water."

"And other things, the same as whisky is. No, I early learned to shun the bottled serpent."

"So did I; in fact, nobody had to learn me to keep away from bottles with alcohol and preserved serpents in them," replied Bob.

"No, no; I mean the flowing bowl."

"Oh, well, why didn't you say so?"

"I thought you understood me."

"All right; good-night," said Bob, bringing the conversation to a close.

Mr. How was evidently very nervous at being in a strange place with a strange room-mate, and although

he thought Bob was not quite as good as he was, yet he felt sorry that he had resolved on going to sleep. Finally, unable to stand it any longer, he asked Bob if he had any objections to allowing the light to remain burning slightly, as he felt sure that he should not be nowhere near so nervous.

Bob was willing. Indeed, he rather liked the idea, for he wanted to go one eye on his ribs anyway, while pretending to be asleep.

But the old fellow had scarcely got down in bed again, with the light dimly burning, when he heard a voice which seemed to come from the next room, saying:

"There's an old duffer in the next room that's got a bag of money; let's go in and smash him!"

The old fellow leaped out of bed.

"Oh, Lord! oh!" he groaned. "Bob—Mr. What's your name?"

"Hello! what's the matter?" asked Bob, at that moment pretending to wake up.

"There are robbers in the next room."

"Nonsense."

"I heard them talking about smashing me to get my money."

"Oh, you must have been dreaming."

"No, I wasn't, for I haven't shut my eyes. Is the door bolted strong enough, I wonder?" he asked, nervously.

"Of course it is. Go to bed, I won't let anybody harm you."

"But—what he wanted to say was, how did he know that Bob was not in league with the robbers?"

He didn't say it, however, but he kept up a big thinking, while Bob kept an eye on him from his own bed.

Mr. Hiram How was sorely disturbed. There he stood, shivering in the cold, half-lighted room, while he listened with protruding eyeballs to hear more from the next room.

Finally a sigh escaped him, a heavy sub-cellar sigh, and then after trying the door once more, he set a chair against it in the shape of a brace, and then started back to bed again.

At that instant the barking of a seemingly savage kloodle dog under his bed frightened him half out of the few wits he had left.

"Oh! ah! wah! ah! Git out!" he yelled, dancing around the room like an excited skeleton.

"What in thunder's the matter now?" demanded Bob, sitting up in bed.

"Didn't you hear it?"

"Hear it! What?"

"A dog; there is a dog in the room."

"Nonsense. Where is he?"

"Under my bed."

"Well, poke him out!"

"I—I—he's a strange dog, and might bite me. May-be he's mad."

"Well, if he isn't, I am. Isay, mister, aren't you a trifle off?" asked Bob, quizzingly.

"Off? What do you mean?"

"Why, a little gone up here," replied Bob, tapping his forehead.

"No, no, nothing of the kind."

"Well, I am glad you are not, but if you were a drinking man, I should suspect that you had a touch of the old Jims on you."

"No, no; I tell you there is a dog under my bed," said he, with his teeth chattering as he sat perched up in a chair.

Bob could with difficulty restrain his laughter as he looked at him.

"Did you see him?"

"No, but I heard him snarl and bark just as though about to snap at my shins."

"Well, that's queer. Here, doggy; here, doggy," he called, and then he whistled.

In answer to this there came from under the bed the grunt and squeal of a hungry pig.

"Merciful heavens! there's a pig there now!" exclaimed the frightened man.

"I don't believe there is any dog there!"

"But there's a pig!"

"What nonsense! Why, man, you must be away off your nut," protested Bob.

"Didn't you hear it just then?"

"No, you're crazy. Go to bed."

"Go to bed with a dog and a pig under my bed! No, sir, never!"

"All right. Stay there in the chair then."

"Won't you please ring the bell for the landlord?" he asked, mournfully. "Oh, I wish I was back home again."

"So do I," replied Bob, reaching over and pulling the bell rope.

"What kind of a way is this to keep a tavern; pigs and dogs in the room? Ah, there's a cat, too," he added, as Bob imitated the mewling of that animal.

"Heavens! what a place."

"Oh, you've got 'em bad," remarked Bob, as he again nestled down into bed.

"Now do you pretend to tell me, young man, that you didn't hear that cat?"

"No, sir. I heard no cat, no dog, no pig," replied Bob, sullenly.

"That's strange."

Just then one of the porters rapped upon the door in answer to the bell, and, with much timidity, Mr. How got down out of his chair and went to open the door, after waiting and becoming convinced that Bob would not do it for him.

"Come in," whined Mr. How.

"What is it you wish?"

"There is a—a—there are animals in this room," said he, trembling.

"Animals!"

"Yes, a dog—a pig—and a cat under my bed."

The porter took a look at Mr. How.

"Animals!" said he.

"Yes; a dog—a pig—and a cat."

"Whew!" and the porter gave a prolonged whistle.

"Will you please drive them out?"

"Oh, yes," and the porter, with a wink at Bob, pretended to "shoo" them out from under the bed, and to kick them afterward out of the room. "Ah! that is all right now, mister. They won't bother you any more."

"Did you drive them all out?"

"Certainly."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes; I just kicked that pig down-stairs."

"How—how came they here anyhow?"

"We had the room open for airing, and they probably got in during the time."

"You should be more careful. Only think how they have disturbed me."

"Very sorry, sir; but you will have no more trouble from them," said the porter, grinning at Bob, as he went from the room.

"Well, now I hope you are satisfied," said Bob, after the porter had gone, and Mr. How had again fastened the door.

"Certainly. It was very careless of the landlord to let those critters into sleeping rooms," he said, getting back into bed.

True, he had not seen the animals that the porter had driven out, but he said he had bounced them, and that was enough to satisfy him, so he cuddled down and began to think of sleep, for it was nearly midnight by this time.

Bob Rollick was, in the meantime, nearly shaking his bedstead down with suppressed laughter, for he had not enjoyed a racket like this in a long time.

"Are you asleep?" asked How after awhile.

"But Bob made no reply, and pretended to be fast asleep."

"Oh, Lord!" he groaned, and then he pulled the bed-clothing up over his head.

Bob waited a few moments, and then, in a quiet way, gave an imitation of a hen cackling under the poor victim's bed.

Mr. How sat up on end in his bed, and once more looked wildly around. But as his courage was equal to a hen, he looked over the edge and under his bed shouting "Shoo!" and other things.

"Dear me, I know this place will drive me mad. It's awful. Shoo!"

But as Bob kept up the imitation of a hen under the bed, cackling and clucking, Mr. How finally got mad, and seizing one of his boots he flung it under the bed savagely, at the same time shouting "Shoo!" loud enough to waken the dead.

Bob again sat up in bed.

"Say, old man, what have you got now?" he asked, glaring at him.

"A hen!"

"Oh, got the hens now, have you? Well, yours is about the worst case I ever knew."

"Yes, sir, there's a hen under this bed and no mistake. She woke me up with her cackling."

"Oh, then you have been asleep, have you?"

"Well, pretty nearly. How do you suppose these things got in here?"

"I guess you brought them in under your hat."

"How is that—what do you mean?"

"Oh, give us a rest!" growled Bob, turning over in his bed.

"But how about this hen?"

"Oh, set on her."

"This is terrible. If I had only known what a place it was, I never would have come here," and then he remained quiet for a few moments.

But Bob was watching him with one half-open eye, and he saw how nervous he was. Indeed, he was a badly broken up individual.

Then Bob tried a turkey gobbler on him, and it was so successful that the old man once more rose up in bed and glared around.

"Gobble—Gobble—Gobble!"

"Oh, Lord! now there's a turkey in here!" he moaned, pathetically.

Bob repeated the "gobble."

"Shoo!" he cried, and seizing his trowsers, he swept them around under the bed in the vain endeavor to drive away that turkey.

But it continued to gobble.

"Shoo!"

"Hello, old man, got 'em again?" asked Bob, raising up and looking at him.

"Oh, I never saw the like of it."

"What?"

"There's a turkey gobbler under my bed now."

"A turkey gobbler! Say, mister, you told me that you never drank anything."

"So I never did."

"Too thin, old man, too thin. Now, please lie down and go to sleep. There is no turkey gobbler under your bed, or, if there is, you are certainly not afraid of one of your old friends."

"But having them in your bedroom?"

"Well, I'll ring the bell again for the landlord."

"Yes, please do."

And Bob rang it. Presently the landlord himself came up, and Mr. How made a plain statement of his grievances to him.

"Now, look here, Mr. How, I keep a respectable hotel, I do," said the landlord, severely.

"But these beasts and birds?"

"Bah! You came here and took particular pains to announce yourself as a very pious man; a man so good that he would not drink anything stronger than sweet cider, and here you are disturbing the whole house with your old-fashioned jim-jams; pretending that there are all sorts of animals in the room and under your bed. Now, sir, if you don't keep quiet during the remainder of the night, I will put you out into the street; yes, I will either do that or have you taken to the station-house, and have your career published to the world. Now, lie down and be quiet."

he added, going from the room, full in the belief that the poor victim "had 'em."

Mr. How looked woe-begone as his eyes followed the landlord out of the room.

"Oh, Lord! Say, Bob—" he called, and just then *Muldoon* got up to stretch himself like a cat, and uttering one wild yell, he pulled the bed-clothes over his head and got out of sight.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE old countryman, Mr. How (occupying the double-bedded room with Bob Rollick at Rochester), when he espied *Muldoon*, Bob's monkey, uttered a wild yell, and got out of sight under the bed-clothes.

Bob was already almost dead with laughter, but he saw the new cause of alarm, and enjoyed it, you bet.

"Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!" he heard him moan, under the bed-clothing.

"What is it now, old man?" asked Bob.

"There it is, there it is!" he cried, making a motion under the clothes in the direction of *Muldoon*.

"What? What have you got now?" asked Bob.

"The cat; there it is!"

"Bah! Say, old man, I can't stand this; I must have some sleep. I have to work for my living, and I can't afford to go it the way you do. You have seen dogs, cats, hens and turkeys to-night, and have kept me awake ever since we went to bed. Now I kick," said Bob.

"But the cat!"

"Get out from under the clothes. What is the matter with you anyhow?"

Mr. How cautiously pushed the clothes down, and looked excitedly towards *Muldoon*.

"There he is! there!" said he, wildly.

"Where?"

"There, there!"

"What?" asked Bob, pretending not to understand what he was driving at.

"The cat—there, on the trunk."

"Bosh!"

"Don't you see it?"

"No! I tell you that you're off; yes, away off," protested Bob.

"But don't you see it?"

"Bah! Go to sleep, or I shall call the landlord," said Bob, and remembering the threat that the landlord had made, the poor victim was paralyzed for a moment.

"But I say—"

"What?"

"That cat."

"Oh, go to sleep. There is no cat here."

"There on the trunk!"

"Oh, shut up!" the monkey seemed to say, as he again lay down to finish his sleep.

If Mr. How had been frightened before, what was he now? That "cat" had actually spoken to him, and told him to shut up, or he certainly was going crazy.

Indeed, he began to think the strain he had been subjected to had worked upon his mind, and that he fancied he saw a cat while looking at *Muldoon*, when in reality there was nothing of the kind in the room.

Oh, how fervently he prayed for morning, and when it came he was resolved to lose no time in getting out of town, and back again to his peaceful and rural home in the country.

As for Bob, he couldn't remember of ever having had more fun in the same space of time; never since he had known enough to enjoy it.

It was now long past midnight, and the trembling victim finally made up his mind that he would sleep if the old boy himself took possession of the room, and so he curled his body up, and after pulling the clothes closely over his head, he tried to sleep.

But the attempt was in vain, for he was so nervous and frightened that sleep refused to lay hands on him, and there he lay sweating and shaking, and wondering if morning would ever come. Once or twice he thought he would get up and dress himself and pass the remainder of the night in a chair in the office down-stairs, but he was too much of a coward to attempt it.

An hour or more passed without any further disturbance. Bob had laughed himself to sleep and his victim was catching on to a cat-nap now and then, but all the while very nervous, and still under the clothes, out of sight and hearing.

The night was rather a cold one, and on that account *Muldoon* became restless, and so began to move about in the dim light of the burning gas without any particular object in view, but simply because he was cold and could not sleep. Bob always undressed him at night, and in various other ways made him do as human beings should do in order to keep clean and healthy.

Finally he jumped up on the dressing bureau and took a look at himself in the mirror; but after a careful inspection he evidently came to the conclusion that he needed brushing, for Bob had already taught him to be particular regarding his personal appearance, and he was therefore much given to putting on style, seemingly taking to it as naturally as his more advanced brother, man.

Coming to this conclusion, he began to look around for his hair-brush, Bob having bought him one for his especial use, but in doing so he rattled around and made noise enough to arouse the nervous Mr. How.

"Oh, Lord! what's that, I wonder?" he moaned to himself. "There certainly must be robbers in the room. Oh, dear, oh, dear! I wish I was home with Sarah, but I don't believe I—I shall ever see—see Sarah—Sarah again!"

The noise being made by *Muldoon* again, the frightened countryman made a desperate effort and peeped out from under the bed-clothing.

The sight which met his gaze was too much for his

nerves; it did not exactly distill him into gelatine, but this time it roused him to a pitch of wildness that caused him to slop over.

There stood *Muldoon* before the mirror, calmly brushing his hair and making his toilet.

"Wal wal bahl!" cried How, loud enough to waken the whole house, and at the same time he clutched wildly at the bell-cord.

The cry frightened the monkey, and dropping the brush he began to chatter wildly and to run about the room, under the beds, over the beds, everywhere, nearly frightening the man out of what little sense he had left, and of course waking Bob Rollick.

Bob saw what the trouble was at a glance, and while How kept yelling for somebody to take the creature away—he never having seen such an one before in his life—he called *Muldoon*, who instantly dove under a blanket and was out of sight in no time.

At that moment the landlord and several of his porters burst in the door, thinking murder was being done.

There sat Mr. How, bolt upright in bed, with hair on end and eye-balls bulged out, pointing wildly this way and that.

"Shut up!" yelled Bob, just as the landlord bounced into the room.

"Here, here, what the deuce is all this row about?" he demanded, sternly.

"He's got 'em again," suggested Bob.

"There it is—there!" cried How, but pointing not in the direction where *Muldoon*, just about as badly frightened as he was, lay hiding.

"Oh, you've got 'em bad. Get up and dress yourself; I won't have my house disturbed by you in this way."

"But Satan is in this room," protested How.

"Yes, I suppose he is. In fact, I guess there is a whole menagerie here to your eyes. Ain't you ashamed, a deacon of a church, and coming down to Rochester tooting your own gospel horn, and at the same time drinking enough on the sly to give you the delirium tremens?"

"It's a—a—I don't drink."

"Oh, I suppose not, in public, but anybody can see how you are now. Get up and dress, I'll take care of you down-stairs."

"I—I—I'm much obliged, landlord. Any place but this," moaned he.

"Yes, and I guess Mr. Rollick thinks so too. Only think what an old hypocrite you are, objecting to sharing a room with a drummer because you thought they were bad people. Shame on you, Mr. How."

"But I tell you there is something in the room."

"Of course there is."

"Something dreadful."

"To you I suppose there must be."

"But I assure you that I saw a little devil right up there on the bureau brushing his hair," the old man protested, as he tremblingly got into his clothes as directed.

Everybody laughed at this, nobody of course being in the secret but Bob Rollick. But How wouldn't have it now.

He was not long in getting into his duds, and then, seizing his grip-sack, was ready and evidently anxious to follow the landlord.

"I am very sorry, Mr. Rollick, for this disturbance, and be assured that had I known what sort of a man he was, I never should have put him into a room with anybody," said the landlord, when about to depart.

"Oh, that's all right enough only I hate to have an old duff like him lecture me on temperance, when he is as full as a goat himself," said Bob, indignantly.

"Well, probably he knew so well how it was himself that he wanted to warn you," the landlord replied, laughing.

"He's a first-class 'frightful example,' at all events. Good-bye, old man."

"I tell you that you are all wrong," protested How.

"I never drank a drop of liquor in my life."

"Too thin, old man—too thin. I know just how it works. Come along." And away they piloted the poor victim down-stairs, where they placed him in the reading-room and left a porter to watch him until morning.

Throwing himself into a chair, with his grip-sack between his legs, he looked nervously around for a few minutes, and then fell asleep with but little trouble. Indeed, being once clear of that terrible room, he felt all right again.

Bob laughed until his sides ached at the success of the job he had put up and worked out for the sake of working an old bore out of his room, and finally went to sleep with a smile wreathing his handsome mug.

The next morning Mr. How lost no time in getting out of town, leaving behind him no enviable reputation, and vowing he would never stay in Rochester over night again so long as he lived.

Bob Rollick had also finished up his business in the place, and early in the forenoon took the cars for Buffalo, intending to take one day's holiday at Niagara Falls. He had never seen this wonder of nature, but having heard much of it, he made up his mind to take it all in.

And Niagara Falls, with its adjacent scenery, is something to take in, don't forget, as many a tourist has found out, and many others will be sure to.

But it would be useless to attempt to describe in cold type such wonders as the eye can take in at Niagara. They must be seen to be appreciated. Even the finest paintings that have been made fail to give anything of an idea of the grandeur that the naked eye can take in; and when Bob first set eyes on the falls, seen from the American side, it nearly took away his breath, so vast, so grand and awe-inspiring was the sight.

He had left *Muldoon* at the hotel, and spent nearly half a day in viewing the sights and making himself

familiar with what he had heard of ever since he could remember.

But after a while he began to take in some of the humorous side of the picture, for, of course, it would not be Bob Rollick if he did not do that. There were a great many visitors there from all parts of the world, as there always are, and of course he found many queer characters among them, who naturally attracted his attention.

He encountered the venders of all sorts of curiosities supposed to relate to the locality, and these for the most part were supposed to be Indians. At all events they dressed like aborigines, and pretended to be relics of an old tribe that formerly dwelt there.

They spoke a jumbling sort of language, about one-quarter English, one-quarter bad French, and the other half being made up of almost all sorts, just intelligible enough to be understood, and this they called Indian.

But Bob thought he had seen several of that sort of Indians in New York. They were colored up a trifle to give them the proper hue, but he felt certain that he had seen many such mugs around Castle Garden, where the owners thereof had just landed.

Approaching one of them who was presiding over a basket of beaded work, consisting of moccasins, bags, watch-holders, etc., he asked the price of a fancy pair of moccasins.

"Ough! tradee bade—maka him four," said he, in his curious gibberish.

"Four what—cents or shillings?" asked Bob, looking inquiringly at him.

"Dolla, four, ough! How."

"Did you make them yourself?"

"Be, yes."

"Are you a noble red man of the forest?"

"Ough! big Injun! how."

"Oh, you are, hey? Well, say, where is your forest?" asked Bob, looking curiously around.

"Way a backie, heap," said the noble red man, pointing to away up the Canadian rapids.

"Canadian Indian, eh?"

"How."

"Were you born in the wildwood?"

"How. Bya?" he asked, beginning to grow slightly impatient at Bob's inquisitiveness.

"Do they have forests in Ireland?"

"Me no."

"Can you twang the bow-string and hunt the bounding buffalo?"

The son of the forest nodded.

"Can you hurl the death-dealing tomahawk?"

"Ough, heap! Bya?"

"Do you ever engage in that poetry of motion known as the war dance?"

"Me, no. Gooda Injun, me; sella bedie some. How!" he said, still more impatiently.

"Have you a squaw and an assortment of kids at home in your wigwam?" continued Bob, still guying him.

"Whoop! Some."

"And in the soft twilight do you gather them together and repeat to them the legends of your tribe?"

This seemed to be a trifle too much for the Indian, and the expression of his face suddenly underwent a change. But he refused to reply.

"And do you stand sometimes on the white man's suspension bridge, and view the landscape o'er? Dost now and then heave a sigh while contemplating the changes that the white man has wrought upon your ancient possessions, and think that the ancient glory of the red man has forever departed?"

The Indian peddler of relics and articles pertaining to Niagara Falls glowered upon Bob. He looked as though ready to eat him up. But the smooth-faced and honest-looking guyer still looked calm and interestingly curious.

"Say, don't you sigh sometimes when you see your race on the square decay?"

The Indian glanced around to make sure that there was nobody in sight or within hearing. But he saw a party approaching on their way to the bridge leading over to Goat Island, and so curbed his emotions, while Bob went on:

"Have you renounced the simple religion of your fathers and joined with the white man in whooping up something more exciting?"

"Me, no; me—Say!" he exclaimed, suddenly changing his tone, voice and manner.

"Sir?" asked Bob, looking at him in the most innocent way, although he, of course, knew that the Indian was on the point of giving himself away.

"Be gorra—" and he looked around again in the most anxious manner.

"What did you say, gentle savage?"

"Begorra, O'll be afther showin' yez fut I'd say, bad luck ter yez," said he, in a strong Irish brogue, at the same time doubling up his fist and shaking it at his tormentor, being able to stand his chaff no longer.

"What! Do I recognize the brogue of one of my countrymen?" exclaimed Bob, with much animation.

"Be out av this or, begob, O'll bust ther whole jaw off av yees!" said that Indian, doubling up his fist and poking it toward our hero.

"What! would you—be my scalp?"

"Be out av this!"

"Would you go back on one of your own countrymen?"

"Yer a bloody young blackguard, so ye are. Be away wid yees."

"Are you an Irish Indian?"

"Bad manners ter yer!" exclaimed the bothered son of the forest.

"Son of the bow and the buffalo chase, don't get excited. I salute you. I recognize in you the only Native American I ever met. Tell me some of your wild legends," said Bob, soothingly.

"O'll be afther tellin' ye that if yees don't get out

av this. O'll bust yer crust, an' don't yer forget it. Away wid yees."

"Oh, say, you're no Indian," replied Bob, laughing. The Indian Irishman, or the Irish Indian, seized a club and made for him. But Bob lit out just far enough to be out of harm's away, and there he stood laughing at him."

"Oh, you are a healthy red man, aren't you? Give us a war dance! Show us how you work the green-john dance, old man!"

"Begerra, but O'll just kill yer if yer don't get away from here," howled the vender of Indian wares, now thoroughly unmasked.

"An Indian from Limerick! How is that for high? Say, I've seen you in New York many a time."

"Yer a liar!"

Bob agreed to it, shook hands with her, and continued on his way.

But three or four of those Irish-Indian relic peddlers concluded that he knew altogether too much, besides being ever so fresh, and so they consulted together as to what they should do with this sharp but unsalted drummer from New York.

CHAPTER XIV.

YES, those indignant Irish, English, Dutch and Yankee curiosity peddlers at Niagara Falls were badly taken aback by Bob Rollick's comical exposure of them, and so they consulted and resolved to make it warm for him.

en, if he wasn't a rooster, and while doing so managed to sell him a large bill of goods.

Mr. Drab, however, thought he could not perform his whole duty towards the young man unless he invited him to spend the night at his house so as to keep him away from any possible temptation.

But Bob concluded that he could take care of himself, and thanking him for his kind offer of hospitality he assured him that he had promised to spend the night at the house of a minister, and then went back to his hotel.

There he found some excitement, for it appeared that one of the chambermaids had gone into Bob's room and found Muldoon seated on a chair, calmly brushing his hair and looking as though he enjoyed it because he was lonesome. This frightened her into



Bob was watching him with one half-open eye, and he saw how nervous he was. Indeed, he was a badly broken up individual. Then Bob tried a turkey gobbler on him, and it was so successful that the old man once more rose up in bed and glared around.

"You used to run a little peanut stand near the City Hall. Oh, I remember you first-rate. How long since you turned Indian?"

"Begob, if I catchould av yees onct, O'll show yees. Away out av this!"

Things began to look a trifle cloudy, and so Bob left his Indian friend and started down the road leading to the bridge, where he presently came upon an Indian squaw, who was peddling nearly the same articles. But she did not look quite so Milesian as the man did whom he had just left.

He suspected that she was a German woman, and knowing a few words of that language, he addressed her in what he supposed to be her native tongue.

And he hit it the first time, for she replied to him in kind before she thought, and then feeling that she had given herself away, she pretended that she was a linguist and understood several languages, notwithstanding she was an Indian.

"Oh, dot vos all righd, Katrina; dot vos pizness. I know you pudt goot ven you vos von of dem vaifter gals in Bismarck Hall py der sidewalk down, hey?"

"Ish dot so?"

"Yaw, yaw. How long hafe you work upon dis cagit, Katrina?" said Bob, imitating a Dutchman.

"Oh, 'bond two year."

"Make much monish?"

"Oh, yes, von vay und anoder. But how you know me, ha?"

"Me? I didn't know you," said Bob, laughing.

"You nefer seen me pefore?"

"Never, but I knew you were no more an Indian squaw than that Mick up there is an Indian."

"Oh, mine goodness! Bud, say, don'd give id away, vill you?" she said, imploringly.

"No, I won't say a word about it. But I tumbled to the racket right away. It's all right, go ahead."

"Dot vos goot. Mums vos der vord."

But Bob wasn't to be caught napping, and so, after getting nearly everybody laughing at them, he took his traps and lit out of town, and started for Buffalo.

He had seen Niagara Falls and got all the fun out of it, as he usually did, but he left the maddest lot of "Indians" there that ever drank fire-water or scalped a white man, and went away laughing, to resume business.

Going to a hotel, as of course he always did, he left Muldoon secured in his cage as the sole occupant of his room, and started out to see if he could drum up some business.

Buffalo is a lively old town, and before he had been there long he caught on to business in a very lively manner, taking several large orders the very first day.

The following day he skirmished around among the smaller dealers so as to make a finish of the place, and then, without having any fun as a relish to his business, he took the train for Erie, Pennsylvania, a beautiful city situated near the dividing line between New York and this State, and one of the most important on Lake Erie.

Erie is not much of a city beyond the lake trade, and its importance as one of the principal stopping places on the great railroad highway from the East to the almost boundless West, and yet there is a large amount of shipping business done there, and it is quite a go-ahead city.

Bob had no guide save the addresses of the merchants who dealt in his line of goods, and going at once to the principal one, he found him to be a worthy old Quaker, who appeared to be greatly shocked to think so young a person should be sent out by such a house as Slope, Slimmer & Co., to represent them, and at the same time to be exposed to the temptations and associations of "the road."

But Bob soon convinced him that he was no chick-

telling the most wonderful stories of what she has seen, and refusing to go into the room again.

"Say, young fellow, what have you got up there in your room?" asked the clerk.

"A trunk or two; why?"

"Got anything alive up there that looks like the devil?"

"Didn't know that I had," replied Bob, soberly.

"Well, the chambermaid insists upon it that she saw the devil up there brushing his whiskers," said the clerk, laughing.

"Well, it must be a devil belonging to the hotel, for I haven't any," said Bob.

"We have no devil here, young man."

"Well, that, of course, I know nothing about. I am a stranger here, but I believe that all well-regulated hotels keep a devil, eh?"

"You are mistaken, young man; well-regulated hotels do not keep a devil; they only have them in printing offices."

"All right; I'll take your word for it and retire to my room," said Bob, bowing and starting to go upstairs.

He, of course, knew what the trouble was all about, but his chief anxiety was to find out what Muldoon had been doing in his absence.

Reaching his room, he found him asleep on the top of his cage, just as innocent as a lamb; but when Bob entered, he jumped up and went through his usual skipping around, indicative of his joy at Bob's return.

"How came you out of this, Muldoon? I left you in the cage," and to satisfy himself, he examined the cage and found that it was possible for the monkey to reach his paw through and spring the hasp that would open the door.

"Now I see," mused Bob. "You have been springing a trap on me, but you won't do it any more, and don't forget it."

Before going down to supper he fixed that hasp and placed Muldoon back again in his cage, telling him to go to sleep and let him hear no more about his tricks.

Indeed, Muldoon had been playing no tricks at all, and had been just as good a monkey as he knew how to be ever since he had been left alone in the morning.

But nothing could induce the chambermaid to visit the room again, and no amount of laughter or the ridicule of her fellow servants would make her believe that she had not seen the devil himself.

Bob, however, had scarcely any fun in this place, and the following day he started for Cleveland, one of the most beautiful cities in the blooming West.

He managed to have some fun on the train, especially with a colored woman who manifested much anxiety to know what he had in the cage.

"And you have actually turned out to be hotel clerk, hey?" asked Bob, laughing.

"That's all; but between you and I, I don't know which following requires the most cheek, but I suspect that drumming does. I encounter any quantity of them here, and I never found one of them who was lacking in the article."

"But have you ever met a bashful hotel clerk? I have encountered quite a number of them, but hang me if ever I have seen one yet whose cheek wasn't hard enough to smash a drummer's all to pieces. But, speaking of rascals, how do you like your business?"

"Well, it would be rather a work-a-day calling did we not meet with so many queer characters; but, on

"Nice time of night to come home, ain't it?" he seemed to say, reprovingly.

Dick Sharp started back in alarm.

"What is that?" he finally asked.

"Mr. Muldoon, allow me to introduce you to my old friend and school-mate, Dick Sharp."

"How are ye, Mither Sharp?"

"What ther—" exclaimed Dick, more astonished and alarmed than ever.

"Speak to Muldoon, why don't you?"

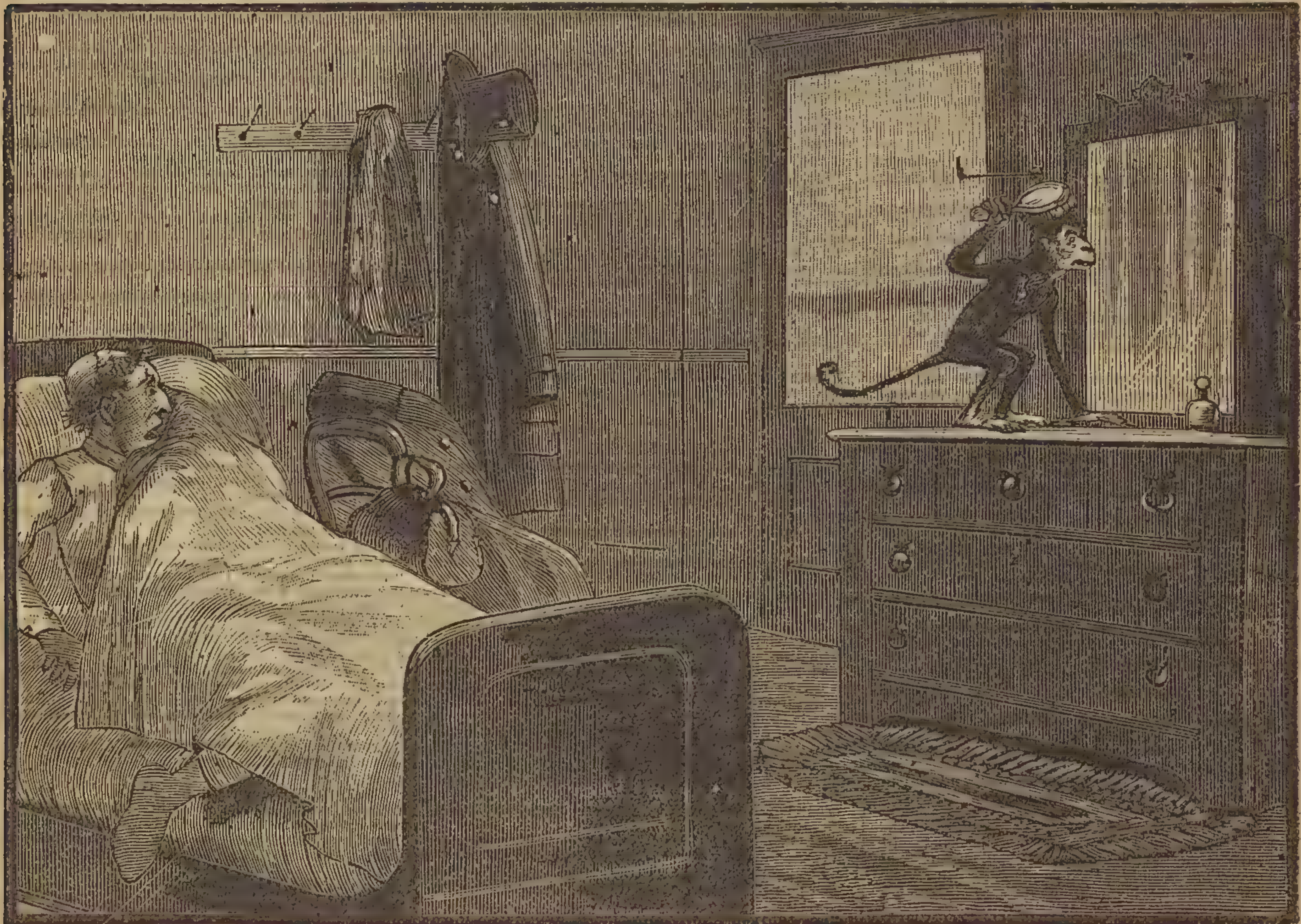
"Speak to him!"

"Certainly."

"What are you giving me, Bob?"

"An introduction to my friend Muldoon, of New York," replied Bob, earnestly and soberly.

"What's ther mather wid that snoozer?" the monk



There stood Muldoon before the mirror, calmly brushing his hair and making his toilet. "Wa—wa! bah!" cried How, loud enough to waken the whole house, and at the same time he clutched wildly at the bell-cord.

"Why, I've got one of your people in there," said Bob, finally.

"What! got one of my people in dar?"

"Yes."

"Golly, can't be a werry big one. Guess you's fool-in'."

"Am it a baby?"

"No, full-grown."

"Go 'way dar, chile. You's tryin' fo' ter stuff me," she protested.

"No, no; I wouldn't stuff you for the world."

"Well, lemme see it."

"All right," and to gratify her curiosity he opened the cage and allowed Muldoon to get out and stretch himself a bit.

"Why, dat am a monkey," she exclaimed.

"Ise no mo' monkey den you is!" Muldoon appeared to say, at which the woman leaped to her feet and manifested great surprise.

"Golly fo' gracious!" she cried. "It talks! It am a man monkey fo' shuah."

"So be you be," said Muldoon.

"Oh, took it away! Shut him up! I know he am de werry debel," and she manifested so much fear that Bob shut him up again.

Here he found not only good trade, but an old acquaintance, in the person of the clerk of the hotel where he stopped. Many and many were the rackets they had enjoyed together while at school, and of course they were glad to see each other, Bob being especially so, since he very seldom met with old acquaintances in his travels.

Of course, they exchanged accounts of what they had done since leaving Professor Backstrap's school; but the story that Bob had to tell of his own experience and adventures was by far the most interesting.

"And so you have actually turned out to be a drummer, hey?" asked Dick Sharp, the clerk.

the whole I enjoy it. But, I say, Bob, I want to see Muldoon."

"All right; I'll take you up and introduce you presently, if he'll stand it."

"Stand it!" exclaimed Dick.

"Yes, he is somewhat particular about people I introduce to him."

"And yet he associates with you?"

"Oh, yes; he recognizes me as his instructor."

"Ah! you have been educating him in some of your monkeyisms, eh?"

"Certainly; been doing for him what old Backstrap used to do for us."

"Then you must have given him quite a number of beltings, that is, if you have done for him what he used to do to me. But you always managed to escape those beltings, Bob."

"Of course I did. I didn't want them," said Bob, laughing.

"I dare say, but that isn't saying that you didn't need them all the same."

"Oh, what rackets we used to have with that old Dutchman!" exclaimed Bob.

"And what rackets he used to have with us?"

So, little by little they went over the memories of their school-days together, enjoying the telling over of them almost as much as they had done the actual events they were recounting.

But at about midnight Bob took him up to his room, where Muldoon sat on a table looking very serious—as he always did, and as monkeys always do—just as though he had been waiting impatiently for Bob's return.

"Ah, old fellow, how are you?" asked Bob, approaching the table with his friend.

Muldoon opened his mouth in a lazy, listless sort of a way, and Bob took the chance to make him speak.

key seemed to ask, so skillfully did Bob use his ventriloquial powers.

"Oh, nothing, only he's a little bashful."

"I guess he's a snoozer."

"Oh, no, not at all."

"Who is he anyhow?"

He is the clerk of this hotel."

"He is!" exclaimed Muldoon.

"Certainly."

"Didn't I tell yer never ter introduce me ter hotel clerks?"

"I know; but this gentleman is an old school-mate of mine."

"A friend av yours an' a hotel clerk!"

"Oh, yes; good men cannot all be drummers and millionaires."

"Take him a-way; he's no good!"

"Why, Bob, this beats anything I ever heard. Do you pretend to tell me that this monkey talks?" asked the astonished clerk.

"I haven't told you anything about it. You have heard for yourself, haven't you?"

"Yes, I should say I had. Where did you get him, Bob?"

"I bought him in Boston."

"And could he talk then?"

"Just as well as he does now."

"Thunder! Why, it's the most marvelous thing I ever heard of in my life. A talking monkey?"

"Well, it is sorter funny," replied Bob, laughing.

"Now, say, how is it anyway?"

"Oh, first-rate; enjoys splendid health."

"Bah! confound his health. I wasn't talking about that; but how is it—I can't quite catch on. There's some snap about it, eh?" asked the puzzled clerk.

"Well, I don't know. How is it, Muldoon, is there any snap about you?"

"Devil a snap, sur," replied the monk.

"Oh, I know better."
 "Put him out!"
 "Put who out?" asked Bob.
 "Put out that grane horn!"
 "Well, I like that," said Dick, laughing.
 "Yer loikes whisky better, I guess."
 "Shut up, Muldoon! Haven't I taught you not to be impudent?"
 "Yes, yer have."
 "Well, then, why don't you obey me?"
 "I don't loike duffers."
 "Now, look here, Bob, I won't have any more of this."

"He wants some whisky."
 "Be quiet, sir!"
 "O'm dumb."
 "Well, see that you remain so. What won't you have any more of, Dick?" he asked, turning from the monk to his friend.
 "This fooling. What is it, anyhow?"
 "Why, a monkey, to be sure."
 "I know that, but monkeys can't talk. Now, what is it? Tell me."
 "Well, I will. It is simply ventriloquism."
 "What! Ventriloquism?"
 "Yes, I have learned the art."
 "The deuce you say!"
 "Fact," and then Bob showed him a few examples of what he could do, greatly astonishing his old friend, of course.
 "Well, that beats the deek. Why don't you give up drumming and go on the stage?"
 "Oh, pshaw! I have all the fun and money I want, and why should I go into the show business?"
 "I would if I were a ventriloquist. If you had only known this when we were at school, what loads of fun we might have had, Bob. I say, bring him down-stairs and lay for suckers."
 "All right. Oh, I have it. We'll put him on the desk and make a clerk of him."
 "Good."

"As well as appropriate, eh?" asked Bob, and they went laughing down-stairs, Bob carrying Muldoon under his arm.

Arriving in the office they found only a sleepy porter there, keeping watch in the clerk's absence, and he was dismissed for the night, greatly to his joy.

Bob took a pen and fastened it behind Muldoon's ear and stood him upon the counter alongside of the registry book.

"There, don't he look just like a hotel clerk?" he asked, after he had got him fixed.

"Oh, get out! You are just the same old Bob that you always was, aren't you?"

"Well, don't he look perfectly at home?"

"He does indeed. Now, if somebody would only come in we might have some fun."

"Yes, we could get right down here out of sight and let Muldoon do the talking," replied Bob, heartily wishing that somebody really would happen in.

But they didn't have to wait long before a man happened in for a place to stay all night, having just arrived on a train.

He was a country-looking chap, and carried a huge old gripsack in his hand. Bob and Dick got down under the counter, leaving the monkey standing where he had been placed.

The stranger approached the desk with an inquiring look, and seeing no one around, marveled much.

"Say!" he finally spoke.

"Well?" said Muldoon.

"Where's the clerk of this tavern?" he asked, without suspecting that the monkey had spoken, but rather somebody not in sight.

"Here I am," replied Muldoon, whereat the man started suddenly, and looked at him.

"Say, where are you anyway?" he called, still not believing that he had heard anything but some person whom he could not see.

"What do you want?"

"Where be you?"

"Don't you see me?"

"Gosh all thunders! be you the clerk of this 'ere tavern?" he asked, in great amazement.

"Of course I am."

"What?"

"Put down your name, please."

"What! put down my name in a tavern whar they have talking baboons for clerks! I guess not!" and seizing his old gripsack, he bolted for the door as though the deuce was after him.

Well, didn't they laugh when the thing was over! They came near arousing everybody in the hotel, while innocent Muldoon quietly blinked and looked from one to the other.

"Bob, that takes the biscuit!" cried Dick, between his fits of laughter.

"You think it snatches the bun, do you?"

"Yes, indeed. Best thing I ever heard in my life. What heaps of fun you must have!"

"Well, I should giggle!" and then he proceeded to tell him of some of the rackets he had since he had mastered the art of ventriloquism.

But before he had proceeded far, the door opened, and a well-dressed man, evidently much under the influence of corn juice, made a devious way towards the office desk. He undoubtedly wanted a bed.

Slowly and unsteadily making his way up to the desk, Bob and Dick meantime having ducked out of sight, the first thing he encountered was Muldoon.

He looked at the strange sight a moment, and then scratched his head. He looked again, and then pounded his forehead. Then he walked back a few steps, rubbed his eyes, and took another look.

"I—I s'pected it—hic!—I s'pected it! I've got 'em! I knew it; I told myself—hic!—that I orter shut down Ramrod! where are yer?" he called, after a pause.

"What yer want, hey?" seemed to come from Mul-

doon.

The drunken loon stood as still as he could, and gazed with open eyes and mouth at the marvel. He appeared to know just about enough to understand that he was all going to pieces—that he must have 'em bad.

He stood trembling thus for a minute at least, not able to speak or move any more than his shaking moved him.

Finally he yelled "Ramrod!" again, that being about as near as he could come to the name "land-lord."

"What der yer want?" seemed to come from the monkey once more, and then the fellow's teeth began to chatter.

"Oh—oh—please. M—M—Mr. Devil. I—I—I'll swear off—I—I—Ramrod!" he called again, wildly.

"Go ter bed, old man."

"Bed! Oh, dear—Bed? Say, lemme go this time, and I—I—I'll swear off; I'll never drink another drop in my life."

"Will you swear it?"

"Yes, yes. I've got enough. Lemme go."

"Won't you stay with me?"

"Ough!"

"All right; I'll give you one more chance."

"Yes, please do!" he said, imploringly.

"But if I catch you drunk again, I will make it red-hot for you."

"Oh, Lord, yes. So you may. I—I—lemme go."

"Well, skip out lively."

And you just go down for that last nickel, and bet that he did skip out a mighty sight livelier than he waltzed in.

And not only that, but he was cured. Nothing on earth could make him believe that he had not seen at least one of the imps of the evil one, and received from him a terrible warning.

The result was, as Bob afterwards learned from Dick, that he was entirely frightened out of his foolishness, and thereafter became a sober and respectable man.

Bob and Dick shook hands, and laughed again over the last racket, for it was even more comical than the first had been.

CHAPTER XV.

BOB ROLLICK never had a better time in his life than he had at Cleveland, where he fell in with his old school-mate, Dick Sharp, who was clerk of the hotel where he stopped.

Dick showed him all over the beautiful city, and introduced him to all the lads. But while he was enjoying himself he was doing a nice business, and after he had finished that he felt loath to leave the place, there was so much fun in it.

Dick was so much delighted with his old school-mate that he took him to many of the houses of his friends, where he entertained them with his ventriloquism and powers of mimicry.

As for Muldoon, he took him out once in a while, but not so often as he formerly had, his part in the general fun being worth too much to give away everywhere cheaply.

But one evening they took the monkey along on account of a job that one of Dick's friends had arranged with old Professor Spud, a naturalist and a man of great consequence—in his own opinion at least.

(That is not the professor's true name, but it is a true story all the same.)

Dick's friend's name was Tom Hogan, a very nice fellow and a great wag. Nothing delighted him more than to get anybody on a string, more especially if it was a person like the professor, who thought he knew everything.

Tom had seen Bob's rackets with Muldoon, and so he made up his mind to have some fun out of it.

So it was understood all around, and Tom told the professor a big cock and bull story about a new species of monkey that had lately been discovered, possessed of vocal organs, and that a young friend of his, who had lately been traveling through South America, had secured one of them, and had taught him to speak the English language with wonderful fluency.

Professor Spud was interested at once, and expressed a desire to see the wonderful creature.

Tom assured him that he should do so, and appointed the next evening for his young friend to produce his animal wonder at the professor's house.

The old fellow was delighted, but in order to make himself solid with several other old roosters like himself, who imagined they knew almost as much as he did, he pretended that he had long suspected that there was such an animal, and that he had sent out to South America by a friend for the purpose of finding a specimen if possible, and had finally been rewarded.

To convince them more fully, he invited three of these old fogies to be present when the young man who had captured the wonder would be on hand to exhibit him, after which he was to write the whole thing up for a scientific journal, and so astonish if not paralyze the world.

Of course Bob tumbled to the racket right away, and joined right in it with all his heart, loving a snap of this kind quite as well as did Tom Hogan, the wag.

Therefore, no little interest was manifested by several people who were desirous of being present on the occasion; both among those who knew it was a sell, and those who were expecting that the world was about to be startled with a sensational discovery.

Bob was on hand with Muldoon, and the old fogies were wild in their anxiety to see the marvelous animal.

Tom Hogan did the introducing, stating at the same time that he had heard the monkey speak as plainly as any of them, although in a higher key, and after mak-

ing a nice little speech, he introduced Bob Rollick, who modestly came forward with Muldoon under his arm.

The professor and his friends gathered anxiously around to get a look at the creature.

"Ah," said Spud, "gentlemen, you can see with only a casual glance that this animal is constituted differently from other specimens that we have seen. Let me point out to you," and going closer, he attempted to open Muldoon's mouth for the purpose of showing the location of his vocal organs.

But Muldoon evidently objected, for he closed instead of opening his mouth, and the worst of it was, he closed on one of the professor's fingers, and he didn't close lightly either.

"Oh, oh, oh! Stop it! stop it!" he cried, dancing wildly around, unable to get his finger out of Muldoon's mouth.

"Let up, Mul!" said Bob, severely, at the same time giving him a light cuff alongside of the head. "What do you mean, you rascal?" he added, as the monkey let go his hold and Spud went dancing about the room, shaking his bleeding finger.

"Well, then, let him keep away from me!" the monkey seemed to say, at which all of the scientific roosters started back in amazement.

Spud forgot his bleeding finger, and stood looking at the animal with open mouth and eyes.

"Heaven and earth, he talks!" they exclaimed.

"Yer bet I do, so don't fool round me any more," piped Muldoon, angrily.

"Gentlemen, the animal, or the human being, whichever you may call it, is very touchy," said Bob.

"Yes; very touchy," said Spud, looking at his sore finger.

"He will not allow a stranger to fool with him in the least."

"They're all duffers," said Muldoon.

"Be quiet, sir," put in Bob.

"But his mouth does not move," said one of the old fellows.

"Yes; that is the peculiarity; and wherein he appears to differ most essentially from the human race. He seems to speak in his throat, and without moving his lips very often, or his eyes either."

"Wonderful!" they all exclaimed.

"Oh, gentlemen, it is most undoubtedly an animal, but strangely developed in one particular direction," said Spud to his friends.

"Never developed so much cheek as you have," muttered the monkey.

"How very apt his sayings are," said one of them.

"And how very true," suggested another.

"Between ourselves, I suspect that there is something diabolical in the creature."

"Bah! got more brains than you have."

And then there was a laugh, although Bob went through the farce of pretending to reprove the monk for being so saucy.

"The creature is positively impudent!" said Spud, looking at him in amazement. "But probably it is mostly owing to his education. What part of South America does he come from?" asked Spud, turning to Bob.

"From the highlands bordering the Amazon River, about a thousand miles from its mouth," replied Bob, seriously.

"Wonderful!" they ejaculated again.

"Not so very wonderful, either, my friends," remarked Spud, who, in spite of his sore finger, was becoming very enthusiastic, and eager to show both his learning, and also what he did not know, but pretended to.

"Not wonderful?" they asked.

"Not in one sense. I have always held, as you can see by reading my treatise on 'Man and the Lower Animals,' in sixteen volumes, that in all probability, somewhere on the earth, and most likely in the unexplored tropics, a connecting link would yet be discovered possessing the organs of speech. Now, gentlemen, you see I was right."

"Oh, shut yer old gas trap, an' give us a rest!" appeared to come from Muldoon, who was now perched upon the center table.

Again, did Spud jump out of his spectacles, so greatly was he shocked at the impertinence of the animal.

The others laughed, which also caused him much pain, although it was high sport for those in the racket.

"I—I am amazed at his impudence, quite as much as at what he is. But he has doubtless been taught many bad things by those who have had charge of his education. But as I was about to say, gentlemen, this *brutus humanus* (excuse my Latin, young men, but we scientists always use it)—yes, this *brutus humanus* proves conclusively that Mr. Darwin and myself are right. I shall write him a letter this very evening, giving him a full description of this wonder."

"Bosh!" said Muldoon.

"Mr. Rollick, would you like to sell this curious specimen of natural history?" he asked, turning to Bob.

"Oh, yes, if I can get my price."

"What is it, pray?"

"One million of dollars."

Spud held up his hands in amazement.

"He can't raise ten dollars."

"Be quiet, Muldoon!"

"I wouldn't live with such an old rooster if he did buy me."

"Excuse him, professor; he has strong likes and dislikes," said Bob.

"I should say so."

"I don't stock up on frauds."

"Be quiet, sir!"

"Oh, take me home, I'm sick."

"I'll pinch your tail if you don't shut up," replied Bob, acting his part finely.

"Ah! what is the effect of pinching his tail?" Spud asked, eagerly.

"Try it," said Bob.

"I have a good mind to, for I have a great curiosity to note the effect of pain upon him."

"Very well; proceed."

Going up behind him Spud gave the monkey's tail a sharp pinch.

He was curious to note the result.

He immediately found out, and had no more curiosity about it.

Uttering a sharp cry, Muldoon leaped upon the professor's back and began to bite and claw furiously.

And Spud began to dance and yell:

"Take him off! Take the devilish thing away, or he will kill me!"

"Stop, Muldoon, stop, I say!" yelled Bob, and reluctantly the monkey obeyed.

"Dear, oh, dear, he's a perfect fiend!" moaned Spud, rubbing his head.

"More fiendish than human," said one of the professor's friends.

"Want ter pinch my tail some more?"

"No, no, no! I've no further curiosity about you; clear out!"

"Better try it once more, ole man."

"Go away! Mr. Rollick, I am surprised that you did not warn me of what he might do," said he, turning to Bob.

"You never asked me, sir. You simply expressed a wish to see what he would do when you pinched his tail."

"True, I wished to note his expression."

"How did you like it?"

"You are a rascal."

"You asked me for my permission to pinch his tail, and I accorded it. Had you but asked me what the probable result would have been I could have told you."

"Yes, very likely. I forgot that."

"Bah! yer haven't got brains enough."

"Be quiet, Muldoon! Would you like to make any further notes, professor?"

"Not at this time; he has completely upset me. But I would like to become better acquainted with him at some future time."

"Oh, take me out of town—kill me—anything but that!" cried Muldoon, and again Bob went through with the farce of reproving him for his impudence.

"You will have to be disappointed, I fear, for I leave town to-morrow."

"Very sorry for that. But I would like your address."

Bob handed him a card, and he read:

"ROBERT ROLICK, Yankee Notions Drummer, representing Slepe, Slimmer & Co., New York."

"A drummer!" exclaimed Spud, and two of his friends echoed it.

"Yes, and stopping at the American House."

"A drummer, with such a valuable curiosity!" And they looked wildly at each other.

"You're a curiosity," put in Muldoon.

"Well, gentlemen, if you have had enough, we will now take our leave," said Tom Hogan.

"Thank you, Mr. Hogan, and I shall hold you in lasting estimation for the favor you have granted us. I shall at once prepare a statement for the press regarding this wonder, which you, in connection with the remainder of the world, will have the pleasure of reading."

"I have no doubt but that there is a rich feast in store for mankind," said Tom, as he started to go.

"Thank you all, and you especially, Mr. Rollick, for this great treat."

"Treat, eh? Well, we'll retreat," said Muldoon; at which the others laughed.

"Why! he actually knows how to pun!"

"That's more than you do. Good-bye, old rooster!"

And away they went, amid general laughter, leaving the fooled scientists looking at each other in wonder.

But they never tumbled—never dropped on themselves once—and after being left to themselves, began to discourse learnedly about the wonder of a talking monkey.

And yet this was not where the greatest laugh came in, for Spud actually wrote an account of the wonder; and as Tom Hogan was one of the editors of the paper to which he usually sent his learned effusions, he naturally took it to him for publication.

This was a part of the racket, for Tom was as good at such things as Bob himself.

The wonderful account was published, and created quite a sensation. But, to tell the truth, very few believed it. They had heard of Spud's wonderful discoveries often before, and yet many did believe there was something in it on account of the straightness of the story, and the names mentioned in connection with it.

But in the meantime Hogan himself had written a true account of the affair for another paper in answer to the article, and when that was published, it created one of the wildest and most general laughs that was probably ever known.

The whole thing was explained, and the conversations given as I have given them here, and it was so natural that no one either refused to believe it or laugh over it.

But if ever there was a sick man in particular, it was Professor Spud, and sick men in general were his fellow men in learning.

Indeed, the laugh that the affair raised was too much for them, and they got out of town just as rapidly as possible, remaining away for a long time in the hope of the thing's dying out.

Think of it, boys! Just think of the sell, and how big it was!

Is it any wonder that they got up and dusted out of town?

Well, not much.

But in the meantime Bob Rollick had got out of Cleveland, and gone on to Toledo, another bright, smart place.

He put up at the Hotel Madison, and at once proceeded to business, all the while enjoying the huge racket he had engaged in at Cleveland, and when the published account of the thing came out, wherein he was mentioned as the hero, he quietly smiled, and tried to hide his identity, for of all things that he detested, it was to posture as a hero.

So far as business was concerned, he did very well, but in the meantime the story of his racket in Cleveland had reached Toledo, and the *Blade* republished it. Consequently, people were not long in discovering that Bob Rollick, of Cleveland, was identical with Bob Rollick, the drummer, now at the Hotel Madison, Toledo, O-h-i-o.

Of course the story as published made quite as much fun all around as it made in Cleveland, and so, in spite of himself, Bob Rollick was a hero, and everybody in town was anxious to see him and his wonderful monkey.

But Bob had had so much fun of late that he rather warped off. In fact, he felt like a man who had eaten a big dinner—dinner, had no charms for him.

And so for the first two days he attended strictly to business, and he found it well worth attending to, the result of the first day being a large order to send back to New York.

But in spite of himself, Bob was forced to show himself more or less. Indeed, one old fellow, a bachelor boarder at the hotel, who had heard about the monkey, and the racket they had played at Cleveland and other places, insisted upon having a private exhibition in his rooms.

Now this old rooster was a character. Tom Carson was his name, and he was a rich old bachelor, fond of fun, but rather sensitive to having jokes played on him.

Bob measured him up, and found out several of his weaknesses and little rackets before the evening appointed for the entertainment, so that he was fully prepared.

Tom had invited about a dozen of his friends to be present, and had also provided a nice "set out" in the shape of refreshments.

Well, they all assembled at about eight o'clock in his room, and then Bob brought in his monkey, and was introduced to the company by the host, who attempted to be serious and to insist upon it that it was a talking monkey, although, of course, his friends were too smart to swallow the yarn.

"Gentlemen," said Bob, looking as sober and honest as a clam, "as Mr. Carson has said, my friend Muldoon, here, is a talker; but I am not responsible for what he says or knows. Mr. Muldoon, how are you feeling this evening?"

"Bully. But, say?" said Muldoon.

"Say what?"

"Who's that old rooster over there?" he asked, pointing to Mr. Carson.

"That? why, that is our host, Mr. Carson," Bob replied.

"He's no good."

"What?" and then the company began to laugh and Carson to blush.

"Wonder how his gal is?"

"His girl? What girl?"

"That fat widow Blake," said Muldoon, and then there was more laughter and more blushing by Carson.

"Good for Muldoon!" cried they; and several slapped the blushing bachelor stoutly on the back.

"Oh, be quiet, will you?" said he, pettishly.

"What do you mean, Muldoon?" demanded Bob.

"I saw him hugging her out in the drawbridge the other night."

Then there was another whoop; for they all knew that the old fellow was partial to the fat, good-looking widow, and they also knew that he had been seen to kiss her while waiting on the drawbridge which spans the Maumee River one night not long before.

This broke up the whole business, for Carson was blushing like a beet, and the others went for him with such shouts and roars of laughter, and they slapped him on the back so hastily that he squealed.

"Stop it! I weaken! What will you have?" said he; and then turning to Bob, he said: "Young man, you take the cake. Don't let that monkey say any more; I have had enough."

And amid a general shout they went for those refreshments, and Mr. Carson had to admit that the Yankee Notion drummer was too many for him.

But the evening passed pleasantly, and Bob gave them some samples of his ventriloquial art, which brought forth much applause and the general verdict that Bob Rollick was a brick of the finest brand.

CHAPTER XVI.

AFTER having all the fun he could stow away while in Toledo, Ohio, Bob Rollick started for Sandusky, a city most beautifully situated on Lake Erie.

Going at once to the Lake House, where he procured a room for himself and Muldoon, he started out to see if there was any business that he could drum up, for, with all his fun and mischief, he never neglected business.

But he soon found there was but little done in Yankee notions in Sandusky, and one small order was all he could rake up in the place, and so he concluded to pull up stakes and make for Chicago.

And yet he resolved not to leave Sandusky without having a little fun. If he couldn't do business he

would try his hand and see what he could scare up in the shape of sport.

The next morning he left his shoes on the outside of his room door for the porter to blacken, and resolved to have a little racket with him when he returned with them.

He had Muldoon all ready, dressed up like a little fine old Irish gentleman, and when he heard the porter coming he threw open the door and stood him up on the wash-stand.

The porter was an old Kentucky darkey, and along he came, humming a plantation melody of the olden time.

Bob was standing behind the wardrobe, behind which he could see the old coon when he appeared at the door.

He rapped gently, seeing the door open, and then espying Muldoon he dropped Bob's shoes, and stood for a moment aghast.

"Where's them shoes av moine?" demanded Muldoon savagely.

"Sho's!" he gasped. "Sho's!"

"None av yer tricks wid me, nagner! Where's me shoes?"

"O—o—oh, Lord, what room am dis yer?" he asked, looking anxiously around.

"It's ighty-noine, so it is. Where's me shoes?" howled the monkey.

"Bu—wah!" bellowed the frightened darkey, rushing down-stairs, scarcely able to keep his feet on account of fright.

Bob picked up his shoes and got into them without loss of time, after which he locked his monkey into the cage and went down-stairs to breakfast just as though nothing had happened.

But on reaching the office he found great excitement there. The old porter had fainted from fright, and his fellows were trying the effects of a glass of rye whisky on him to see if it would bring him to.

Probably he concluded that they would not give him more than one glass, and, having allowed them to pour that down his throat, he was just on the point of reviving as Bob reached the scene of excitement.

"What ther blazes is ther matter with yer?" the hotel clerk was just asking. "Been fighting?"

"Oh, Lord, boss, no, no!" moaned Ebenezer, glaring wildly around.

"Well, what's ther row; got a fit?"

"Boss, I've done gone seen de debel!"

"What?"

"Guess somebody's been hol'in' a lookin'-glass up afo' him," suggested another porter.

"Fo' de Lor, boss, I seen him!"

"Where did you see him?"

"Up in 89, shuah."

"Oh, go 'long wid you, nigger. You's got de snakes in yer boots," said another porter, at which there was loud laughter among the servants.

"No. 89 is occupied by Mr. Rollick, of New York," said the clerk.

"How big am he?" asked the old porter, anxiously.

"Oh, he's of medium size."

"What's mejum, boss?"

"Why, about the average size."

"Wha' dat—wha' eberage size?"

"Oh, you old numbskull, a person about the size of anybody," replied the clerk, savagely.

"Den dat aren't him."

"What do you mean?"

"He aren't no bigger den a cat," said he, and again his fellows laughed.

"Oh, you's got 'em fo' shuah! Betta luff up on you bug juice, ole man."

"I guess I knows wha' I seen, an' I don't drink half so much bug juice as you uns do. I tole yer dat de debel am up yer in 89, 'bout as big as a cat, an' you'm laugh jus' much as yer wants ter; guess I know when I seen de debel good 'nough," said he, indignantly.

"What did he do?" asked Bob, who had been listening to the conversation, at the same time winking to the clerk, who recognized him as the occupant of the room in question.

"He jus' axed me whar dem boots dat I war black-in' fo' him," said he, whereat the party laughed. "I tole you it am a fac'."

"Well, what did you say to him?"

"Say! S'pose I tork ter de debel? No, sah, I jus' feel de wool straighten right up on my head, an' I drop dem shuz an' run fo' my life."

"What do you think of that, Mr. Rollick?" asked the hotel clerk.

"Well, as I have the honor to occupy the room 89, and he insists upon it that I have the devil for a roommate, I can hardly call it complimentary."

"Whar am dem shuz?"

"There they are," replied Bob, pointing down to his feet, then turning to the clerk he added: "My door was open, for I was waiting impatiently for him to bring my shoes. All at once I heard a whoop, and, dropping my shoes, he ran as though the evil one was after him."

"An so he was fo' shuah."

"Bah!" said the clerk. "You have been hoisting in too much bad whisky lately, and if you don't stop it you'll see the devil on the outside of this hotel. If you see him at all. Now go about your business," he added, turning away.

"Boss, I tole yer dar am somfin' wrong up dar in 89," protested the porter.

"Nonsense! There is nothing wrong up there; it is all under that woolly topknot of yours," and then the other porters and hall boys began to jibe him most unmercifully.

Bob enjoyed it hugely, of course, as he always did, and again winking to the clerk, he turned to Nick in a sympathizing way:

"I am sorry for you, Nick, but I guess what the

boss says is right. You have evidently been indulging too freely in corn juice," said he.

"Yah, yah, yah!" laughed the other servants, "dat's wat de matter am wid Nick fo' shuah."

"I tole yer, boss, dat I habn't got on de outside ob mo'n a quart ob whusky in a whole week," protested Nick.

"A quart? Well, now, that is quite enough to demoralize any man. A quart of new whusky! Well, well! Nick, you must stop it entirely. You are not so young and fustil-oil proof as you used to be, and a quart a week will surely kill you."

"Boss, I don't feel it noways."

"Perhaps not, but it is working on your brain, and that is why you do not feel it as you used to. Now

Some of them returned, part way, and in the most cautious manner peeped in at the open door.

"But I don't understand it."

"You don't? Well, Tom, how is it, anyhow?" asked Bob, addressing the cat.

"We're all broke up," said Tom.

"Thunder and blazes! Say, young fellow, what sort of a racket is this, anyhow?"

"He has us all on a string."

"Well, I should say so."

"He's a ventriloquist," the happy old Tom seemed to say, while Bob caressed him.

"What? Oh, look here. I tumble," said the clerk, laughing.

"It's about time."

"Now I understand it. You are one of those ven-

his hind-legs that his handsome head was visible above the table. "Dear kitty," she added, "come over and see me."

"Me-ow! you're too spoony!" Bob made the cat seem to say, at which the spoony couple started back in alarm, although Bob kept looking at his bill of fare. But he managed his voice so that it sounded like that of a cat, with that peculiar "me-ow" in it that it made it seem all the more natural, as if the cat actually did the speaking.

"Oh, George!" exclaimed the lady.

"Oh, baby! what was it?" he asked.

"Didn't you hear that?"

"What?"

"That cat; it seemed to speak just like a human



"Put down your name, please." "What! put down my name in a tavern whar they have talking baboons for clerks! I guess not!" and seizing his old gripsack, he bolted for the door as though the deuce was after him.

this imagining that you hear and see things is terrible, Nick. It shows that you are on the brink of insanity."

"I tole yer, boss, dat I neber was better in my whole life. I'se a member ob de church, an' dat settles it."

"Oh, for that matter, many a church member has gone wrong in this world. Now I would not be surprised if you could hear this cat talk," said Bob, picking up an old bob-tailed feline that had the superintendence of the rats and mice of the hotel.

"Dar am no debil 'bout dat-ole Tom."

"Oh, no, probably not, although the rats may think there is. But the trouble is all with you, Nick," said he, stroking the cat's back in such a way as to make him raise it very high every time.

"That's so!" the cat seemed to say, but Bob pretended not to hear it.

Nick's lower jaw dropped, and he instantly became almost white with fear. In fact, the others did not know what to make of it, and stood around with bulging eyes and speechless tongues.

"Nick's bad; he steals rum down cellar," the happy and back-lifting old mouser seemed to say.

This was too much, and Nick went all to pieces, while the others took to their heels and began yelling: "He's a hoodo man! he's a hoodo man fo' shuah!"

A hoodo man or woman among the negroes is about the same as what we used to call witches.

Bob laughed heartily at the success of his racket, but at the same time he saw that the clerk was also puzzled about it.

"What in thunder is it, anyway?" he asked.

"It is the cat."

"But that—that—it seemed to talk."

"Oh, yes," replied Bob, and all the while he could hear the negroes exclaiming about the hoodo man who had bewitched the cat.

triloquists who have the faculty of throwing their voices anywhere, and imitating anything; aren't you?"

"That's what Tom says."

"That's what Tom says, or rather what you make him say. I understand. But how did you manage to frighten Nick so?"

"Well, it was an easy job. I have a pet monkey up in my room, and when Nick came with the shoes I stood him upon the wash stand, and appeared to make him talk."

"Good, by gracious—good! Say, I'd like to see that monkey," said the clerk.

"All right, I'll take you up and introduce you to him when I come out from breakfast," replied Bob, starting for the dining-room.

He was followed by the cat, Tom, for he had found in him a better friend than he usually found, and his idea probably was that he would be able to catch on to some grub if he stuck close to him while at breakfast.

But Bob didn't object; he was as fond of animals as they were of him, and so he rather encouraged him to follow.

He took a seat at the table directly in front of a newly-married, and therefore exceedingly spoony, couple, and the cat commenced to purr and rub around his legs, and occasionally to stand up on his hind-legs and to interrogate him with his velvety paws as to what he was going to order for breakfast.

The lady sitting opposite espied the cat while Bob was carelessly looking over the bill of fare, and she at once began to notice him.

"Oh, George, see that darling kitty!" said she.

"Where, ducky?"

"See his head over there by that gentleman," said she, pointing to Tom, who was so tall as he stood on

being. "Oh, George!" and she sighed a sigh that seemed to come up from the tip ends of her sandal slippers.

"I—I guess it was only imagination," said he, eying Bob Rollick closely.

"Give me a nice sirloin steak; some baked potatoes; some buckwheat cakes, and a pot of coffee," said Bob to the waiter just then.

"Didn't you hear it, George? It seemed to say that we were too spoony."

"Oh, gracious! What a lie! Where is the brute?" he asked, looking under the table, for Tom had by this time got down again.

"What big feet!" seemed to come from under the table, at which the young wife started as though certain that it applied to her.

Indeed, it just did, but Bob had a paper in front of his face, pretending to read the news, and so no suspicion could attach to him, seemingly.

The young wife blushed, and her husband looked as though he wanted to have some club exercise with somebody just then.

She looked under the table and there beheld old Tom, the bob-tailed cat—the comical cat—for he was comical looking in spite of himself.

"Oh, George!" she exclaimed.

"What is it, ducky?"

"The creatures t—that is—his—his caudal appendage has been abbreviated; only look!"

"The monster! It isn't a cat at all, my dear, but some horrible monster," said he, and then he said, "scat," real hard.

"Mew! what a skinny pair of ankles!" was the next thing they heard from under the table, at which she shoved her chair back from the table, and gathered her skirts closely about her feet.

Then she uttered a little scream, and George, he said "scat" again, harder than before.

hotel, "this shall be my headquarters for just as long as business will allow me to make it so. If I cannot be in New York, Chicago is the next best place."

And then, after attending to a few other matters, he sat down to answer his adopted mother's last letter, which he found awaiting him there.

Her letter to him was full of kindness and tender solicitation for his welfare, and in reply he wrote her with all the feeling of a dutiful son, for in spite of his natural inclination to devilry, he had learned to have the greatest respect in the world for Miss Gnarley, his adopted mother.

This can be readily understood, for he was a founding, and in all his life had never known a parent's care, and what more natural than that he should take to her and love her almost as well as he would love a natural mother?

During the first few days Bob did a rushing business, notwithstanding there were several other drummers there in the same line of trade, and he really had no time for attending to anything else.

But one day, while making his rounds, he met with another of his old school-mates, his old particular chum, in fact, Joe Bimm, and the meeting between them was of the most cordial nature.

"Bob Rollick, or I'm a liar!" said Joe, starting back.

"You are no liar, or I am when I call you Joe Bimm!" replied Bob, extending his hand, cordially.

"Bob, how are you?"

"And how are you, old school-fellow, as Handlet says?"

"Fine as silk; but, by gracious, I should scarcely have known you."

"No? Why not?"

"Why, you have grown and thickened up so, 'pon my word you have," said Joe, standing off and looking at him.

"And so have you, Joe, for that matter. But how have you been?"

"First-class. How have you been yourself?"

"Oh, downy."

"As usual?"

"Yes. Live here?"

"Cert. What brings you here?"

"Biz."

"What are you doing?"

"Working."

"What?"

"The city."

"What on?"

"Yankee notions."

"What?"

"I'm a drummer."

"The deuce you say!"

"Solid, cold fact."

"Caught on just as you wanted to, eh?" asked Joe, laughing.

"Yes, you know I always wanted to be a drummer."

"I know you said that was your racket, when you left school."

"Left!" exclaimed Bob, laughing.

"Well, you sort of meandered away, didn't you?"

"Oh, yes; but I was bounced all the same."

"And it served you right, for never was there a poor school-master so outrageously worked upon as was old Professor Backstrap, and chiefly by your doings."

"Well, he tumbled at last, didn't he?" asked Bob, laughing.

"Well, slightly. But come in here and sit down where we can have some foam, and you can tell me all about yourself."

"And you will tell me about yourself?"

"Well, I should whoop a horse laugh if I didn't. Did I ever keep anything back from you, Bob?" asked Joe, as he led the way into a restaurant.

"Not much, as I ever remember of."

They took seats in the place, where for two hours they rehearsed their old rackets while at Professor Backstrap's school, together with what had befallen them individually since then.

And after adjourning they had an appointment to meet at Bob's hotel that evening, where they were to live over the good old times again.

Then Bob introduced him to Muldoon.

"But what the deuce do you carry this creature around with you for?" asked Joe.

"Oh, he's lots of company for me."

"Company!"

"Yes, we have many a social chat together."

"Now, hold on, Bob, don't give guff to one of the old gang. What's the racket?"

"New species of monkey lately discovered, and I have learned him to talk."

"Talk!" again exclaimed Joe.

"Yes, but for some reason or other he seems to take more naturally to the Irish brogue than any other, and so I have named him *Muldoon*," said Bob, laughing.

"Oh, come off! What are you giving me?"

"Straight snap, Joe."

"Oh, cross over."

"Isn't that so, *Muldoon*?" he asked, turning to the semure-looking monkey.

"*Av coorse it is*," the monk seemed to reply.

Joe Bimm leaped from his chair and stood looking at him with open eyes and mouth.

"What is it, anyway?"

"It isn't a what-is-it; it's only a talking monkey," replied Bob.

"Come, come, old fellow; I won't have it," replied Joe, looking really serious, for he was fooled as much by Bob's ventriloquism as others had been.

"I don't want you to have it, for I wish to keep it myself," said Bob, laughing.

"But there's a snap here somewhere. Who ever heard a monkey talk?"

"This is a newly discovered species, I tell you."

"Nonsense. It looks just like any other monkey."

"Well, but it has vocal organs like human beings."

"Bah! I guess you are the one that has the vocal organs. I won't have it."

"Very well, talk to him yourself."

"Talk to a monkey?"

"Certainly. Ask him what his name is."

Joe laughed heartily for a moment, and although he suspected a trick of some sort, he finally turned and asked:

"What is your name, old man?"

"*Muldoon*," came the reply.

"Are you the solid man?"

"I am."

"Who learned you to talk?"

"*Bob Rollick, ther ould daisy.*"

"But do you really talk?"

"*Do I really ate, do yer think?*"

"Well, I suppose you must do that, but you are the only monk I ever saw or heard of that could talk. How is it, anyhow?"

"*How is phat?*"

"How is it that you can talk?"

"*How can yerself?*"

"Well, that takes the cream cake! Bob, there's a fortune in that creature," said Joe, as completely fooled as ever anybody was.

"Yes, but more fun than money," said Bob, laughing heartily.

"What do you mean?"

"And so even you don't tumble?"

"No, I don't catch on. What is it?"

"Well, I'm surprised at you. Did you never hear of ventriloquism?"

"What?"

"The art of ventriloquism."

"Yes, but—"

"I'm on it, Joe," replied Bob, laughing.

"On it! Wasn't you *always* on it? But I don't omehow catch on to this. What is it?"

"*You must be a duffer!*" *Muldoon* seemed to say, sneeringly.

"What?" exclaimed Joe.

"*Of course he is!*" added somebody who appeared to be in the wardrobe.

Joe ranto it and threw open the door.

But there was no one there, of course; only a little more of Bob's ventriloquism.

Then when he closed the doors again a merry but smothered laugh sounded within.

"*You're a sucker!*" was added.

"Well, Bob, I guess I am. Tell me what it all means."

"Why, ventriloquism, as I told you."

"But who is the ventriloquist?"

"*Bob Rollick is!*" came again from the wardrobe, if one's sense of hearing could be believed.

"Bob, I'm gradually tumbling—are you a ventriloquist?"

"That's what's the matter, Joe," said Bob, laughing at his friend's confusion.

"You did all this?"

Bob bowed.

"You did the monkey?"

He bowed again.

"And the chap in the wardrobe?"

"*Of course he did!*" said a voice within it.

"Oh, by gracious! That carrols the butter-cake, Bob. That takes the pie! Shake!" and the muchly-befooled Joe Bimm extended his flipper with great earnestness.

Bob shook with him.

"Where did you catch on to it?"

"Oh, picked it up on the road."

"The deuce you did! Well, by gracious, you can pick up almost anything, I do believe. But I cannot help thinking what a heap of fun we might have had at school if you had only known it then."

"That's so. But I tell you I manage to pick up a snicker here and there as it is."

"Well, I should cough!"

"Manage to fool almost everybody," said Bob, and then he entertained him with much of the fun that the reader has already enjoyed during the progress of the story since he purchased him in Boston.

O, course Joe Bimm was delighted with the history of the escapades of his old chum since they had parted at the school at College Point, but in no particular of it so much as that evolved after he had learned the art of ventriloquism and had purchased his monkey.

"Bob, I have it!" exclaimed Joe, after listening for several hours to the story of his dearly beloved old school-chum.

"Where did you get it, Joe?"

"Just caught on to it."

"Say how it is."

"It is in the shape of an idea."

"Oh, you have caught on to one idea, eh?"

"I have. Listen to me. Come home with me!"

"Home with you! Have you got a home?" asked Bob, laughing.

"You bet I have. Got the finest boarding-house in Chicago. Private, my boy, strictly private. Mother and four bouncing, dashing daughters, and only two old dried-up bachelor boarders besides myself. What! Perhaps I haven't caught on to a family pudding," and then he gave a prolonged whistle, which confirmed what he had said.

"But you haven't told me yet what you are doing here," said Bob.

"Haven't I? Oh, I'm working the grain racket."

"Ah, I have heard about you fellows! Rather a tough set of speculators, I guess," said Bob, humorously.

"Oh, we're all right; but what do you say to coming home with me—say to-morrow night—and bringing *Muldoon* along? Why, we can have a square cord of fun with the girls and the boarders."

"Well, I'm favorable, on one condition."

"Name it, Bob."

"Do you remember that old racket we played on Professor Backstrap and his friends—I mean with the chromos?"

"Why, you just tickle yourself that I do. How?"

"Can't we find the chromo of a monkey somewhere here in Chicago?"

"What! Do you suppose that there is anything in the world that cannot be found in Chicago? Well, should totter if there was. Want the chromo of a monk?"

"Yes—about *Muldoon's* size."

"I'll work it, Bob."

"All right; if you can, have it here by seven o'clock to-morrow night, and then I will tell you what my racket is."

"Good snap! I remember enough of them to know that they are good, all of them. I'll be on hand, sure."

"Must you go now?"

"Yes, Bob, it is past twelve, and I am supposed to be a model young man at home, and if I am out later than two o'clock in the morning, why, it might lead them to believe that I kept fast company."

"All right," and Joe bidding Bob good-night left for his boarding-house.

True to his promise, Joe Bimm procured the chromo of a monkey and brought it to Bob's hotel the next evening.

They talked over the old racket that they had played upon Professor Backstrap while they were at school, and finally Bob took his knife and cut out the head of the monkey on the canvas, just as they had cut out the heads of the old man's chromos.

This carefully done, he inserted the head of *Muldoon* in place of it and found it to be a first-rate fit, although the live monkey could not exactly understand why his mug should be thus thrust through a canvas in order to take the place of a pictured one.

But Bob finally reconciled him to it so that he would remain quite still after being placed in position.

In the meantime Joe Bimm had prepared the family for the reception of his old school-mate, whom he had represented as a great artist, and that he would pay them a visit, bringing with him his latest production in animal pictures.

So it will be understood that the whole business was nicely worked up, for those who have followed the fortunes of Bob Rollick know how carefully he always prepared his rackets.

Placing *Muldoon* under his coat, while Joe took the chromo, they started forth for the fun that might come out of their visit.

Arriving at the house, Joe conducted Bob to his room, where *Muldoon* and the picture were left, after which they went down-stairs, and Bob was introduced to the family and one or two of the boarders who were in the parlor.

Bob found the ladies charming, and half an hour or so was spent most delightfully, after which the mother and landlady expressed a desire to see Bob's latest picture.

"Ladies, I assure you that I have had hard work to get him to bring even a sample of his work, for my friend Rollick is very bashful," said Joe, whereat the ladies exchanged glances, for, although Bob had acted somewhat retiring, they somehow knew that he was a live lad and a racketeer.

"Well, we are very glad he has brought us something, but where is it, pray?" they asked.

"Up-stairs in my room, and, if you please, we will go up there and see it. I assure you it is the most life-like thing I ever saw in my life."

"Oh, certainly, we will go up with pleasure," they all said, with animation.

"I beg pardon, but if you will allow me to go up in advance of you and arrange my picture under a proper light, I shall only be too happy to show you my poor work," said Bob.

"Certainly," said they all, and, bowing, Bob left the room and went up-stairs, where he fixed the picture on Joe's table in such a way that nobody could conveniently see behind it.

This done, he placed *Muldoon's* head through the opening, and fixed him so that he could sit comfortably behind the canvas, and then fixing the light, he was ready for the show to begin.

The company was escorted up-stairs by Joe Bimm, and the moment they entered the room, they were struck with the exceeding naturalness of the picture.

"Isn't it splendid?" asked one.

"Why, it seems to be actual life instead of cold paint and canvas," said another.

"Oh, my!" shrieked another of the girls.

"What is it, dear?" asked the mother.

"It certainly is alive."

"No, no; impossible."

"It—it actually winked at me!" she protested, and then all of them laughed.

"You may laugh—but I—I—there! it did it again. See?" she exclaimed.

They all looked attentively, and finally *Muldoon* winked again in his sober way. There could be no mistake about it, but the idea of a picture's being painted so near to life as to actually wink was too much to believe.

"What is the meaning of this? Why, I am sure I also saw it wink," said the landlady.

"Oh, it is simply the effect of the light," said Bob, still looking as honest as a cat.

Then they changed their position to see if they could get away from the effect of the light. But no, that monkey kept winking at them.

Finally one of the gentlemen went closer to it in order to make sure that there was no deception, when *Muldoon* showed his teeth, and the man started back in affright.

"What is the matter?" asked the landlady.

"It's really alive. I know it is." "I beg pardon, but if you will all retire a moment until I can change the light, I will convince you that it is not alive, and after all but a poor picture," said Bob, at which they wonderingly retired, and Joe kept up the racket while Bob was removing Muldoon's head and replacing the painted one.

Then, after secreting Muldoon in the closet, he called the company in again.

"Under this light you will perceive that the picture possesses none of those astounding features which you have noticed," said he, and then they all inspected the chromo again.

"Wonderful!" they exclaimed.

"Never saw or heard anything like it," said the confused gentlemen.

"How do you account for it?" asked one of them, turning to Joe Bimm.

"Simply an optical illusion," said Joe. "I say, Bob, can you reproduce it?"

"Certainly," and going to the closet he took Muldoon and placed his head through the picture as before, while they all stood aghast almost.

"I knew it—I knew it was a real monkey," said one of the young ladies, and then there was a little laugh, although the gentlemen and the landlady scarcely liked the idea of being so terribly sold.

"Allow me to introduce you, ladies and gents, to Mr. Muldoon," said Bob, politely.

"I'm glad to see you," the monkey seemed to say, at which the astonished auditors screamed and rushed wildly from the room, leaving Bob and Joe laughing behind them.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE fright which Bob Rollick had occasioned at the boarding-house of his friend Joe Bimm was not only laughable but slightly sensational, for one of the landlady's daughters tried so hard to faint that a bachelor boarder felt it to be his duty to support her in his arms.

They all made their way down-stairs to the parlor, whither Bob and Joe followed as soon as they had enjoyed their laugh, although they left Muldoon upstairs.

"For mercy's sake, Mr. Bimm, what is the meaning of this?" asked Mrs. Darling, as soon as that joker appeared.

"Yes, Joseph, how is it?" asked one of the daughters, who had been somewhat frightened at hearing the monkey speak, as she supposed.

"Well, ladies, I can only explain the matter by saying that Mr. Rollick is a ventriloquist, and that the matter of the painting was simply a trick to amuse you," said Joe, thinking it best to make a clean breast of it.

"A ventriloquist!" they all exclaimed.

"Yes, my dear ladies."

"And so it was only a—a—"

"Only a joke," said Bob, bowing politely.

"Well, really!" and they all laughed, and then they shook hands with him.

"What a fright it gave me, though," said the pretty Miss Darling, who had come so near to falling in a faint, and yet, in spite of that, she left the old bachelor who had "saved" her from falling and went over to Bob.

"How very clever you must be," said Mrs. Darling, smiling.

"Of course he is," said Joe. "Haven't you heard me tell about our rackets when we were at school, together?"

"Certainly; of course we have. But I—I—"

"You hardly credited the stories, eh?"

"Well, Joe, you know you are sometimes given to romancing," said she, archly.

"What, Joseph?" asked her mother.

"Well, he told me that he intended to—to—"

"Ah, ha! he did, eh?"

"Yes," said she, demurely.

"And has he refused to keep his word?" asked her mother.

"N-no; he—"

"Oh, now, that's all right, Tilly. You don't mean what they think you mean. I promised to take you out for a ride on Michigan Avenue and Hyde Park; wasn't that all, Tilly?"

"Well, wasn't that enough?" she asked, with a provokingly pretty pout, and then they all laughed.

"Of course it was," they said.

"But there's time enough yet, and just for a little thing like that you should not doubt my word regarding my friend Rollick."

"That is so, Joseph. I guess she will trust you awhile longer, in spite of appearances. But this digression is not fair to Mr. Rollick," said Mrs. Darling.

"That is so," they all remarked, and again all eyes were directed to Bob.

"And so you are a ventriloquist, eh?" ventured the oldest daughter, approaching him.

"Well, I do a trifle in that line, although drumming is my legitimate business."

"Oh, you are a drumming ventriloquist."

"I beg pardon—no, I am a ventriloquial drummer."

"Ah! I see the difference," said she, laughing.

"Well, suppose you favor us with some further illustrations of your art?" suggested Mrs. Darling.

"Well, really, my friends, I am not exactly on exhibition," said he, modestly.

"Oh, certainly not; but won't you get your monkey down and make him talk?" asked another of the daughters.

"Muldoon cannot talk."

"Well, make him make believe talk, won't you?" she asked, coaxingly.

"He is very bashful."

"Which means," said Mrs. Darling, "that you are very bashful, eh?"

"That is it exactly," put in Joe Bimm. "My friend was always noted for being very bashful indeed."

"Oh, come to think of it, he certainly must be, for the stories you have told us regarding him, while you were at school together, are quite enough to convince us of that fact," said the youngest daughter.

"Joe, I fear you have been slandering me," said Bob, looking seriously at him.

"Not at all. I always insisted that you were the very pink of modesty and perfection," replied Joe, at which they all laughed.

"Oh, this is all to put us away from the original proposition: namely, that we have some more of Mr. Rollick's ventriloquism," suggested one of the gentlemen.

"Yes, yes, please do, Mr. Rollick!" and this was said in such a sweet, persuasive way that Bob weakened.

"Hark!" said he, suddenly starting and listening, with his face toward a wardrobe or book-case that stood in the corner.

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Darling.

"Nothing, perhaps; but I thought I heard somebody in that wardrobe," said he, looking as honest as a hen.

"Mercy! you don't think so, do you?" asked Mrs. Darling, who had a great horror of secreted burglars and "men under the bed."

"I'll soon find out about it," and Bob went over to the wardrobe.

Knocking upon the door he asked:

"Hello! Who is in here?"

No response from within, but much anxiety was manifested by those in the room, for not even Joe Bimm tumbled to the racket.

"Oh, I guess there's no one there," one of the men ventured to remark, while Bob was listening attentively at the keyhole.

"No; let us have a little ventriloquism," said one of the young ladies.

"Certainly, but I would first like to know for certain whether there is any one secreted in this wardrobe or not."

"Oh, my! only think if there should be, Joe," said Tilly, snuggling up to him as if for protection.

Joe was ready to fight for her against any quantity of odds, but he could not for the life of him make out what Bob was driving at.

"Hello," said Bob, again rapping upon the door.

"Anybody in here?"

"None of your business!" they all thought they heard somebody say within the muffled confines of that fancy wardrobe.

Then they all screamed of course, or at least the females did, and the men folks, even to Joe Bimm, so completely fooled was he, sprang quickly to their feet, looking daggers and revolvers.

"What are you doing in there?"

"None of your business!" was the muffled response.

"Indeed! Perhaps I will make it so?"

"No, you won't."

"How do you know I won't?"

"You aren't game."

"Oh! ah!" from the ladies.

"Are you armed?"

"Don't forget that I am."

"Oh, I'm going to faint!" exclaimed the widow.

"Don't, please, ma, or I shall too."

"No, please don't. We'll take care of the rascal," said one of the male boarders, at the same time bracing up to her.

"Well, sir, we are also armed, and you had better come out of there at once."

"No, I won't."

"You are a thief, sir, and shall be handed over to the police."

"Shut up; you're too fresh."

"Oh, ah! now I know I shall faint!" the charming widow cried.

Indeed, now that her favorite bachelor boarder sat next to her, she seemed even more anxious than ever to faint.

And that was funny too, wasn't it?"

"Too fresh, am I?" asked Bob, still with his ear close to the door.

"Yes, you are. Go take salt."

"Oh, ah, ah! Support me, Mr. Doublender."

"Of course I will," said the bachelor boarder, putting his arm around the landlady's waist.

"Yes, for I know I am going to faint."

"Please don't."

"Only think of it! a robber, secreted in my house! Oh, ah, ah!" she whimpered.

"Oh, Joe," said Tilly, "don't leave me, will you?"

"Of course I will not," he replied, all the while in doubt as to what the truth of the matter was.

"Come out of that, or I'll pull you out," said Bob, earnestly.

"Have you got a cork-screw?"

"No. Why?"

"If you get me out you'll have to use one."

"The deuce you say!"

"That's what I warble."

"Now, do you know what I am going to do, with you?" demanded Bob.

"You'd better let me alone, I can tell you."

"But I don't propose to let you alone. I am going to open this door, and shoot you if you make the slightest resistance."

"No, you won't."

"I won't? We'll see about that," said Bob, taking his revolver from his hip pocket.

At this, of course, the females all let off a scream, while the men prepared for battle.

"Oh, let us go before you do anything rash," said the widow.

"Oh, oh, oh!" screamed one of her daughters, and, for fear that she was going to faint, Joe Bimm rushed over to her.

This made Tilly jealous, and then she didn't care if there were fifty secreted burglars in the house.

"Do you surrender?" asked Bob.

"No, I don't."

"All right, then I'll make you," and seizing the knob of the door, he pulled it open, and again the ladies screamed.

"Come out of this!" said Bob, and then he worked up a little funny business by way of imitating with both voice and actions a wild struggle with the supposed robber.

"Do you surrender?"

"Yes—yes, I weaken!" said a voice, but it was now so plainly heard since the door had been opened that it did not sound a particle like it did before when the door was closed and it sounded smothered.

Of course this was another proper point for the females to scream, while the men rushed forward to assist Bob in subduing the robber.

But as they approached, Bob threw wide open both doors, and the wardrobe was seen to be almost entirely empty.

The men were paralyzed and the ladies seemingly on the point of fainting in dead earnest.

Joe Bimm was the first to tumble, after he had looked into the wardrobe and then at Bob, who stood a few feet away, laughing.

Then Joe began to laugh, for he saw that the whole thing was but a specimen of the art ventriloquial, and that Bob had fooled them all most beautifully.

"Where is he?" demanded the gentlemen, rushing towards the wardrobe.

"Oh, take him away!" cried the landlady.

"Shoot him!" said Tilly.

"Where is he?"

"Oh, Joseph, what are you laughing at?"

"At the success of the trick," replied Joe, still laughing heartily.

"Trick! Where is it—where is that bad man?" demanded one of the daughters.

"In your mind."

"What do you mean?" demanded the landlady, suddenly recovering.

"That we have been sold."

"Sold! but where is the robber?"

"In your mind, I tell you."

"But how about it anyhow?" they all began to ask, for somehow the fact began to dawn upon them that they had been sold.

"For further particulars I refer you to my friend, Bob Rollick. You all wanted to hear a specimen of his ventriloquism, and he has given it to us."

"What?"

"And there was nobody in there after all?"

"Not a soul."

"But I heard him—we all heard him," persisted Mrs. Darling.

"No, ladies, you simply thought you did. It was but a poor imitation of the voice of a person in the wardrobe," said Bob, bowing.

"A poor imitation! Well, if that was poor, I don't know what a good one is," said one of the astonished gentlemen, and the others fully agreed with him.

But the ladies refused to believe that their hearing had made a fool of their other four senses, and so went timidly to the open door of the wardrobe and looked in.

By this time the laugh had become general among the others, and they were shaking hands with and congratulating Bob on his splendid success as a ventriloquist.

"But wasn't there any man after all?" asked Tilly, looking around.

"Are you disappointed, my dear?" asked Joe Bimm, taking her hand.

"Oh, how foolish you talk, Joe! But I surely thought there was a man in there."

"And because there was none, you of course feel sad and neglected. But it's all right, I suppose?"

While this chaff was going on the others had taken a tumble, and were laughing and complimenting Bob on his success.

And so the evening wore away. It was one of surprises, amusement, and pleasure, such as none of them had ever enjoyed before, and when Bob took his leave, it is safe to say that he left behind him warm friends and admirers, as he always did.

But it must be borne in mind that he was all the while attending to business, and doing a good amount of it, too.

And yet Bob never missed a chance for sport if he could help it, and in this respect Joe Bimm was a good left bower for him while he remained in Chicago.

It was only a few days after the adventures which I have just recorded that Joe learned of an old rooster—a naturalist—who had quite a collection of stuffed animals which he was very fond of showing to his friends. Indeed, they were very much like the old fellow whom he had fooled so beautifully at Sandusky with his "talking monkey."

Bob and Joe talked the matter over, and it was finally agreed that Joe should go and see Professor Morrow, and tell him that he had a young disciple in the person of Mr. Robert Rollick, who was at that time visiting Chicago, and who would be only too delighted at making his acquaintance.

This part of the business Joe carried out with his usual skill, and so Bob was to be introduced that very night, when the professor would have a reception for his friends, and throw open his private museum for their inspection and admiration.

Bob was on hand with his monkey, and it was comical to see him attempt to be familiar with the stuffed monkeys which were arranged around the room in different positions.

There were about a dozen people present, and Professor Morrow was in his glory, for it gave him a chance to show off his knowledge, which was always meat and drink to him.

But Muldoon attracted considerable attention on

account of being the only live specimen in the collection, and this excited the jealousy of Professor Morrow.

"Oh, this is only an ordinary Brazilian monkey of ring-tailed *Apis* variety; not at all to be compared with some of my specimens here," said he, with a wave of his hand.

Bob, however, took no offense, and allowed Muldoon to smell around one of the stuffed monkeys to which he appeared to take a great liking. In fact, he did not seem to understand that it was not alive and stuffed only with sawdust, and his antics around it created considerable merriment.

Finally he stepped back a few feet to where Bob was leaning against a long table, and he quietly placed his arm around him in a protecting sort of way, and sec-

"Hold on here! I—I don't understand this business, anyhow," said Professor Morrow, looking wild and swallowing quick. "How is it?"

"I am sure I do not know," said Bob.

"But how about this monkey of yours?"

"Oh, he's regular."

"But this faculty of talk that he has?"

"Well, how about your alleged stuffed monkey?" asked Bob. "He also appears to talk."

"I do not understand it. There must be some mistake; some chincanery here," said the professor, looking wild.

And by this time the old scientist's friends had gathered around, manifesting much alarm, and to him were full of questions which they hoped would explain the mystery.

"What is it—a horse-car?" asked Bob, laughing in the face of his friend.

"No, no; I have an idea."

"Of and for what?"

"For fun in the first place."

"Well, in the second?"

"A big racket."

"That's my snuff; how is it?"

"There is a certain alderman in Chicago."

"I dare say."

"And he's a darling."

"A what?—I thought you said he was an alderman."

"Oh, come off!"

"What for?"

"To give me a chance."



The excitement had run so high that the company had become panic-stricken, and began to get out of their private museum as fast as they could climb.

ing at the same time a good opportunity for some fun, he began to operate with his ventriloquism.

"Say, what's yer name?" the live monkey seemed to ask of the other one, and this of course created much excitement among those who were looking on.

"Me name's Pat Rooney—futs yours?" the stuffed monkey made answer, and then they all started back in great alarm, the old professor among the rest.

"Oh, oh, oh!" was the general exclaim.

"Me name's Muldoon, an' I'm a solid man," replied Bob's monkey, and then the cry went several degrees higher.

Professor Morrow approached timorously. He put on his glasses and looked earnestly at Bob's monkey.

"What is the meaning of this?" asked one of his friends, turning to him.

"Oh, it is simply one of those *Apis Lingues* species. They can almost speak—that is to say, they have the partially developed organs of speech, and are supposed to be the much-talked of "connecting link" between the brute creation and the human race," replied the professor.

"Yer a snide!" came from Muldoon, at which the professor started, as did his friends.

"That he is!" put in the stuffed monkey.

"What has he done to you?" asked Bob.

"He fed me on sawdust for six months."

"What for?"

"Because it was cheap."

"And how are you now?"

"I'm stuffed."

"What with?"

"The ould stuff—sawdust."

"But are you alive?"

"Ay course I am."

"Yet he exhibits you as a stuffed monkey."

"Because it's cheaper than feedin' me."

Some of them went so far as to pinch and feel of the stuffed monkey to see if it was right and regular.

Another attempted the same liberties with Muldoon.

But the live monkey objected.

He had teeth, and he made use of them by fastening upon the instigator's hand.

There was a howl and a squall which startled the whole company.

"Give it to him, Muldoon!" the stuffed monkey seemed to say.

But Bob choked his monkey off after he had gone far enough.

"Give me another taste of the sucker!" he appeared to cry.

But by this time the excitement had run so high that the company had become panic-stricken, and began to get out of that private museum as fast they could climb.

Bob Rollick took Muldoon under his arm, and started with the others, closely followed by Joe Bimm who was laughing enough to split at the way things had worked.

CHAPTER XIX.

STILL in Chicago, Bob, continued to do business and to have heaps of fun at the same time.

Joe Bimm was his constant companion, just as he used to be at school, and just as much his admirer as he was then, if not more so, for the accomplishments which Bob had acquired since his school-days made him even more jolly and companionable than he was in those good old days.

"I say, Bob," said Joe to him, the day following the events narrated in the preceding chapter, "I think I have caught on to something."

"What to do?"

"To tell you something."

"About what?"

"That alderman."

"Well, how is it, anyhow?"

"Oh, come down a step or two. As I said before, we have an alderman here."

"And, as I said before, I dare say."

"He has a name."

"You don't tell me so?"

"Fact!"

"Whisper it!"

"Muldoon!"

"You don't tell me so!" exclaimed Bob.

"Cert! Well, now, I have it."

"What?"

"The racket I was speaking of."

"On who—the alderman?"

"All the time."

"Good enough! State it!"

"Alderman Muldoon! Catch on?"

"Well, I seem to feel it. Work it out."

"The alderman is going to have a reception."

"When?"

"To-morrow night."

"Well, how can we catch on?"

"I have it."

"Show it."

"Let us get up some cards of invitation, stating that the alderman will meet his friends at the Pimlico. How's that?"

"Good enough—but how?"

"Take your Muldoon along, and I'll take my oath they look enough alike, with the exception of size, to be twins. Catch on?"

"Verily. But can you work the invitation racket?"

"Like a mice."

"All right. I'll work the other part."
With this understanding they commenced to work an old-fashioned racket.

There was at that time an alderman in Chicago by the name of Muldoon, and he was a Russian, of course.

Muldoon is a common name among the Russians. "Mul," as he was familiarly called by his friends, was one of the "gang," and it was not at all out of his regular way to give a reception and invite all of "the boys" to come and see him.

But of course in this instance he knew nothing about the matter.

And yet the invitations went out. They read like this:

"How did it happen, 'Mul,' old fellow?"
"Well, me by's, I've been after drinkin' extra dry Mumm, an' it's dried me all up," said Muldoon, or seemed to say so, at which they all laughed again.

"But I say, Joe, how is it, anyway?" asked one of the party.

"Don't you catch on?" asked Joe.

"Not exactly."

"Well, allow me to introduce you to my old friend and school-mate, Bob Rollick," said Joe, introducing him to the company.

They all shook hands with the handsome young drummer, and yet they did not seem to quite understand about Muldoon's talking.

"By's, I'm glad for ter see yees," put in "the Alderman."

who were gathered there greeted him with shouts of laughter.

"Ol'm a loir, am oi!" was his first whoop.

"What's the matter, Mul, old boy?" one or two of them asked.

"Ol'm a scapegoat, am oi?"

"Not at all. What's the matter?"

"Am oi not an alderman av this city?" he demanded, hotly.

"Of course you are. Why not?"

"An' arn't oi untitled to respect?"

"To be sure."

"Who don't respect you, Mul?"

"Me friends, as oi thought."

"What do you mean?"

"Why am oi thraduced?"



"Howdy Moses! It spakes!" said he, looking at the diminutive counterpart of himself. "Don't yees know me?" "Pon me sowl I do not." "Don't know yer little brother, Moike?" demanded Muldoon, savagely, so it seemed.

"Alderman Muldoon would be pleased to enjoy your society, at Parlor No. 4, Palmer House, Wednesday evening next, at eight o'clock."

"ALDERMAN MULDOON."

These invitations were sent to certain ones, the majority of whom Joe Blimm was well acquainted with, and to carry the thing out in style, he and Bob had a few bottles of wine and some salad prepared, and the room all in readiness for the reception.

Then they arranged a small chair on the table behind the refreshments, and placed Muldoon in it.

He was dressed in nobby style, got up so as to resemble the alderman as much as possible, and, in fact, they succeeded so well that they even had his red necktie down to a dot.

Well, at the appointed time those who had received the invitations began to arrive, and Joe Blimm introduced them to his nibs, Alderman Muldoon.

At first they could not understand it, but when they recognized the likeness to the alderman, they laughed heartily and gathered merrily around the table.

"How are you, 'Mul,' old boy?" asked a friend of the absent alderman.

"Ol'm all shrunk up, by's," Bob made Muldoon seem to say, at which the politicians all started back in astonishment.

Then they slowly tumbled to the racket, and such a shout of laughter as went up those parlor walls never echoed before.

They all shook hands and swore that it was the best joke they had ever heard of.

They all shook hands with "the Alderman" and drank to his health.

"Mul, old boy, you're a daisy."

"But it's too bad you're shrunk up so," and then they laughed again.

"Not the slightest doubt about it, old man. But how is it anyhow?" asked one of them.

"How is you?"

"How about you?"

"Oh, oi'm all shrunk up."

"Been drinking alum cocktails, I guess."

"No, oi'm dried up wid extra dry."

"Gentlemen, you seem to be a little mixed about this matter," suggested Joe. "Allow me to enlighten you by informing you that my friend, Bob Rollick, is a ventriloquist."

"Oh, ho!"

"Ah, ha!"

"I catch on!"

"I tumble!"

"I see the strawberry!" and various other expressions were made use of, while the company were again shaking hands with Bob and congratulating him on his comical racket.

"Oh, if 'Mul' could only take this in!" exclaimed one of the party.

"Sure, an' arn't oi here?"

"Oh, yes, but we only wish that the old original was here to enjoy it."

"Wouldn't he, though?" and then there was another laugh.

While this was at its height, there ensued a scuffle and some little excitement outside of the parlor door.

"Lave go av me, or oi'll bust yer bloody crust for yees!" was the excited cry.

"Ah, there's the old man himself!" said they.

"Ol'm after bein' thraduced in here, oi'm tould. Lave go yer hould av me!" and the next instant the door was thrown quickly open, and Alderman Muldoon rushed wildly into the room, while his friends

"Who is traducing you, old man?"

"What are yees here for?"

"To have some fun."

"But who put out them invites?"

"Give it up, if you didn't. Why?"

"Why! Me friend, Terrance McCarthy, axed me about it. He had an invite from me that oi never soigned at all, at all, an' divil a thing oi iver knowd about it. Fut is it all about, onyhow?" he asked, calming down and looking about him.

"Hello, Mul!" said Joe Blimm, extending his hand to him.

"Are yees here, Joe?"

"Of course I am. Allow me to introduce you to Alderman Muldoon, of Boston," said Joe, taking him up in front of Muldoon.

The real Muldoon started back in genuine surprise. He seemed to be looking into a mirror as he gazed at the monkey: one of those curious mirrors which make objects look smaller.

"Fut's that?" he finally asked.

"Hello, Mul! old fel! How are ye?"

"Howdy Moses! It spakes!" said he, looking at the diminutive counterpart of himself.

"Don't yees know me?"

"Pon me sowl I do not."

"Don't know yer little brother, Moike?" demanded Muldoon, savagely, so it seemed.

"Mother av Moses! How is it?" asked the alderman, turning to the company.

"How is what?"

"Where did that little man come from?"

"Why, you ought to know; he says you are his brother, Mul. How is it?"

"Begorra, but yees have ther best av me," said he,

rubbing his head, and looking from one to another and at Muldoon. "Fut is it?"

"Are yees goin' back on me?"

"Sure, oi don't know yees. Is it a dwarf?" he asked, never tumbling to the snap, and then they all laughed.

Just then Muldoon, who had evidently got tired of sitting in his little chair, got up and stretched himself, and of course showing his tail.

At this, Alderman Muldoon jumped back towards the door in alarm.

"Howly mother av Moses!" he exclaimed, with looks of terror in his face.

"What's the matter, Mul?" they asked.

"Luck at it."

"Well, what of it?"

"Fut sort av a baste is it, anyway?"

"Der yees go back on me, Terrance?" the monkey seemed to say.

"Och, be jabers, oi don't know yees. It's some sort av a put up job on me, oi'm afther thinkin'," said the alderman.

"What makes you think so?"

"Fut's that?" he asked, savagely, at the same time pointing to Muldoon.

"Oh, don't go back on your relatives!" said somebody.

"Yer a loyer!" he whooped, excitedly, at the same time looking for fight.

"Der yer shake me, Terrance?" seemed to come from Bob's monkey.

"Oi'll shake ther divil an' all av ye! It's a job ye've put up on me, so it is, an' oi can lick the stuffin' out av ther man as put it up!" said the excited alderman, spanking his fists together savagely.

"Don't get excited, Terry!" said Muldoon.

"Ter ther divil wid yer!"

"Fat fur?"

"Yer a baste wid a tail."

"Where's yours?"

"Get out av that, or oi'll bate ther everlastin' loife out av ye! Say, lads, fut's ther job yer workin' on me?" he asked, turning to the laughing company.

"Mul, we'll let you out of this for a basket," said one of the crowd.

"Av fut—peaches?"

"No—Mumm."

"An' will yees kape mum?"

"To be sure we will."

"All roight. Ring for a basket," said the alderman, and yet without thoroughly understanding the snap that had been put up on him.

"How do you like it, Mul?"

"Oi'm bothered to death! Fut is that thing, anyhow? It looks loike a monkey in soger clothes," said he, still bothered about Muldoon.

"Well, Mul, that's about what it is," said Joe Bimm, shaking hands with him.

"Is it yer job, Joe?"

"That's all right, alderman," said he, and then they all laughed heartily and shook hands with the old Mick.

During this festivity Bob Rollick was introduced to the alderman, and they shook hands, though for the life of him he could not make out exactly what it all amounted to.

As for Muldoon, he regarded him at first as a dwarf, but when he saw his tail he weakened.

That it was a joke of some kind he could no longer doubt, but exactly how or why it was he could not understand. But after they had drunk his wine, and had still more fun with him, they finally told him how it was.

He had heard of the supposed art of ventriloquism, but he was bound to regard it as a Black Art; and even after the party had had all the fun out of him that was possible, he did not then understand what the real merits of the case were.

However, the affair turned out all right, and the company had a glorious old hurrah at the expense of the Chicago alderman.

But the laugh was on him, and even to this day the story of "the dwarf Muldoon" is sure to catch him, and almost always a bottle.

Nothing could be finer than the way Bob had it while in Chicago.

He had already put in two weeks there, and besides doing a nice business, the orders for which he had sent back to New York, he had had fun enough to set a grave-yard laughing.

And during this time he had made a heap of friends and acquaintances, all of whom recognized him as "one of the boys."

"Joe, I'm going to leave you," said he, one day.

"Don't say it!"

"Fact. I've worked this town for all it is worth, and now I've made up my mind to take a run to Davenport, Iowa, and from there take a steamer down the river to St. Louis."

"But what's your hurry? There's lots of fun to be found in Chicago yet," said Joe.

"No doubt of it. Chicago is good; red-hot! Outside of New York it snatches the corn-ball, but I must get on. Biz is biz, you know!" replied Bob, cheerfully.

"But won't you stop here on your way home again?"

"Well, I should purposely snicker right out loud! Why, of course I shall. I shall be here again in about a month."

"I only wish I could take the trip with you, but I can't."

This he said in dead earnest, for Joe nearly worshipped Bob, and nothing would have pleased him more than to have kept in his company continually. But the best of friends must part, and shaking hands earnestly, Bob Rollick and Joe Bimm parted.

From Chicago to Davenport is about one hundred and fifty miles, but the ride was uneventful, even

dreary, although it lay through one of the most fertile districts in the whole world.

Putting up at the Newcomb House, he proceeded to go over the breezy little city in quest of business.

But there was only a little of it to be found there, and so, without working very hard to drum it up, he took the steamer for St. Louis.

Travel on Western steamboats varies somewhat from that on Eastern boats, but principally on account of the difference in the passengers whom you meet.

Bob was not slow to notice this difference in the people, and it soon became a source of amusement to him to watch them.

Of course there were any number of well-dressed ladies and gentlemen on board the *River Belle*, the name of the steamer, but there were also any number of characters peculiar to Western and Hoosier life.

Lean, long, gaunt men, with their pants tucked into their boots; their long hair covered by broad-brimmed hats; their loud talk, but undoubted bravery, Bob did not fail to notice or appreciate.

And the ladies also attracted his notice, they were so different from those living East, not that they were any less beautiful or true, but there was a bluff, hearty way with them that could be but noticeable to an Eastern man.

There were several poker parties scattered about the boat, some on deck and others in the different cabins.

Bob took it all quietly in. He knew but little about gambling, but he knew very much about fun, and he saw heaps of it in the business that was going on.

There was one particular "card sharp" that attracted his attention. He was playing with three others, and winning all the time. Bob did not understand exactly how he did it, and yet he knew enough about the game to know that there was something crooked about it, and that there were at least two suckers who were being weeded of their money at quite a lively rate.

"Look out for sharps!" a voice cried, but seemingly far away from Bob.

In an instant the four players leaped to their feet, and two of them pulled pistols.

"Who's a sharp?" at least three of them demanded.

"Look out for the chap with the big mustache!" They all looked in the direction from which the exclamation seemed to come, but all they saw was an old darkey asleep and hanging over the railing of the upper deck.

Then they all looked at each other.

"Who said that?" the sharper asked.

"It must have been the coon."

"What!" and that card sharp rushed over to where the darkey sat asleep, and seized him by the coat collar. "Did yer say anything?"

"M—me, boss! I—I jus' done been 'sleep, dat's all," said the trembling coon.

There could be scarcely any mistake about that, for everybody saw that the poor fellow had been suddenly roused from sleep, and naturally enough was half frightened out of his wits by the bad man who grasped him.

"Maybe he talked in his sleep," one of the gamblers suggested.

"Wal, now, yer jus want ter keep them glims o' yourn open, for if yer go ter sleep an' tork any more that way, I'll feed alligators with yer," said the gambler, chucking him back again on his seat.

"Boss—I—I—"

"Shut up!" and the darkey cowered quickly.

They began another game.

"Watch that deal!" seemed to come from some one of the several spectators about, and throwing down the pack of cards that gambler bully leaped to his feet.

CHAPTER XX.

"I CAN lick the cuss as said that thar, an' he can throw in a few of his friends if he wants ter!" exclaimed the gambler, with fire and blood in his eye.

It will be recollected that Bob Rollick was one of a number of spectators who were watching a game of poker on board the *River Belle* on the way down to St. Louis, and that he was having some fun with his ventriloquism.

"Who said 'watch that thar deal,' hey?" he again demanded, savagely.

"I didn't," protested several.

"Maybe it war the coon," suggested one.

"No sree! I hearn somebody right round here somewhar say it, an' I'll give ten ter fondle him a few minits—I will, by thunder!"

"Lem's a squar man, an' it's a shame ter sass in that thar way," said one of the gambler's cappers and friends.

"Them's so, for sure," chirruped the other cappers. Indeed, everybody appeared to be agreed on this point; his friends, because it was a game in which they were all interested, and others, because they wished to avoid trouble.

"Yes; an' I can squar myself with anybody as says or thinks crosswise of it," the gambler bully again exclaimed, glaring around.

As for Bob, his young, fresh face and naturally innocent manner protected him even from a moment's suspicion that he might be the guilty party.

"Ther man's a skunk, an' don't dar ter face pizen!" he yelled once more; but, as before, no one offered to dispute the matter with him, and he finally resumed the game.

Bob, looking even more innocent than ever, if possible, stood watching the game. The hands were dealt, and some preliminary betting made, after which they began to draw to fill their hands.

"I'll bet ten dollars," said one of the sharps.

"I shall have to see that ten, and raise it ten," said one of the flats.

"Look out for four aces!" cried a voice, and in-

stantly each one of the players turned down his hand, and looked up.

Then they looked at each other.

Which of them held that hand of four aces?

Neither of them wished to say whether he did or not for obvious reasons, and yet each one was, of course, suspicious of the other, thinking that some one in the company had seen such a hand as spoken of, and had uttered the warning in a friendly way.

"I'll be hanged if I'll play any such game as this. Let each man pull in his money," suggested one of the gamblers, having received a look from the other which assured him that they did not hold the hand in question.

"Yes," said they all, eagerly, and each one reached for his cash.

"Now that's all right," said the bully sharp. "It's agin usage, but just ter settle a pint in my mind as ter who did ther blabbin', I'd like ter know who held them aces."

"All right; so would I," said the others, and each man displayed his hand.

There wasn't a hand that had four or even a single ace in it!

What the mischief did it mean?

The gamblers turned around, and began to look sharply at the spectators of the game, who were quite as much astonished as they were.

"Say, who's ther sucker in this yer crowd, anyhow?" the boss gambler finally demanded.

"Why, it must be a joke," suggested one of the bystanders.

"Joke!" exclaimed the gamblers.

"Yes, because none of you held four aces."

"Bah! I'd just like ter fondle ther joker, that's all," said one of them.

"So would I, an' if it's repeated thar's somebody goin' ter get a hole bored in 'em."

"That's so," and once more the "corners" were made good, and the hands dealt out.

Bob felt a trifle ticklish about going any further with the joke, knowing that the sharps were in dead earnest, and were liable to shoot on the slightest provocation, and so he allowed the game to go on for some time without molesting it.

"Five aces!" a voice sung out, soon after a fresh hand had been dealt.

This produced even more excitement and indignation than ever.

Each one of the players threw down his hand, and, drawing their "ante," refused to play any longer.

Yes, Bob had succeeded in breaking up the game, but a more indignant lot of gamblers are seldom met with than they were. They cursed and swore, and tried their best to find out who had done the blabbing, but of course they did not succeed, and finally they retired to one of the state-rooms, where they could resume the game without having any spectators about.

This of course ended Bob's fun in that particular direction, and he was obliged to look around for some more.

But it was not long before he found it, however, for on the promenade deck there was a very fresh youth who was doing his best to "mash" some young ladies.

Oh, he was gorgeous! He was highly nifty. He knew how exceedingly handsome and stunning he was without being told.

The young ladies were smiling and giggling among themselves, and he was evidently satisfied that he had them crushed utterly.

Bob carelessly threw himself into a chair between where this pulverizer and the young ladies were sitting, and taking out a paper quietly began to read.

This evidently somewhat annoyed the would-be masher, and he changed his position after awhile so as to get an unobstructed view of them, and in doing so came nearer to Bob.

Again he began to grin and twist the ends of his baby mustache.

Some of the young ladies would not look at him, but two or three of the younger ones giggled and acted about as silly as some girls will, although no more so than the fellow did.

Several of the passengers noticed him, and evidently felt just like chucking him overboard, although he paid no attention to their frowns. But presently Bob Rollick took a hand in.

"Aren't I real pretty?" he said, for the fop, as he stood twirling his shoe-brush and looking the girls almost to death.

The effect of this was decidedly marked. The ladies laughed right out in his face, while the men and matrons who had heard what they thought to be the fop asking such a question were decidedly indignant, while the fellow himself was completely bewildered and blushed like a love-sick girl. He really wanted to say what was said, but he knew very well that he had not said it.

"Wal, you be a pretty cuss, anyway," said an old Westerner, glaring at him; whereat there was a general guffaw among the passengers, and that masher blushed worse than ever.

Indeed, he felt like jumping overboard, or getting under cover somewhere else.

"Why, say, yu're almost too pretty to live. Why don't somebody stick a pin in yu, an pin yu up agin a house somewhar, so everybody can get a look at yu for nothin'?" the old man continued.

"I said nothing to you, sir," the fellow finally managed to say, but in a voice so like the one that Bob had employed at first, that those sitting around did not notice the difference between them.

"Oh, yu're askin' the girls over thar if you wan't real putty, I remember, now. But as the little critters are sorter bashful like, I'll speak for 'em. Yes, yu're as putty as a jay bird, yu are, by thunder. Don't it make you sick sometimes?"

"No, sir, it does nothing of the kind," said he, real spiteful.

"It don't 'I'll be hornswoggled if I shouldn't think it would when yu look in a glass," said his tormentor, at which everybody roared again.

"I don't want anything to say to you, sir," said he, turning away, abruptly.

"Come back, ther gals are just dyin' tu hug an kiss yu!"

"Come back, and let us put some salt on you!" cried another, and that dandy rooster vanished, followed by a shout of laughter.

Indeed, it was not long before that chap was marked all over the boat, and finding himself the object of sneers and laughter, he quit the boat at the next landing.

This bit of fun made everybody merry, and Bob of course enjoyed it even more than any of the others did, for he knew the secret of the whole racket.

There were quite a number of children on board, and as Bob was naturally very fond of them, and was soon on friendly terms with several of them, he felt like leaving the more bolsterous rackets that he had generally engaged in, and have some gentle fun with the youngsters.

So he went to his state-room and brought out Muldoon, who, by the way, was mighty glad to get out for a little fresh air and exercise, and yet he could not have been more so than the children were to see him.

Muldoon at once became a hero, and not only the children on board, but nearly all of the grown people, got greatly interested in him, monkeys being very rare out that way.

Bob's pet capered around the deck, and acted as though it was a part of his duty to inspect everything, high and low.

But after allowing him to roam around for awhile he took him in hand, and showed the children several tricks that he had taught him to perform, and this proved exceedingly interesting to the children, as well as to others who gathered around him.

Finally a Chinaman made his way into the group, and became interested deeply.

Bob spotted him instantly.

"How muchie?" he asked, pointing to Muldoon.

"How much for what?" asked Bob.

"Flor lillie man wiv tallie."

"Oh, the monkey?"

"So be."

"Well, I don't think Mr. Muldoon would consent to your owning him; would you?" he asked, addressing the monkey.

"I wud not," Muldoon seemed to say, in a strong Irish brogue.

The Chinaman and everybody else started in astonishment at hearing a monkey talk, as they all supposed, and various were the expressions they made use of.

"And why would you not consent to be owned by our Celestial friend?" asked Bob.

"Because his tail is longer nor molne," replied Muldoon, as they all thought.

"Oh, you are jealous of him, are you?"

"O'm not. He has his tail on ther wrong end av himself, so he has," and this produced a laugh as a natural consequence.

"Muchie talkie monkey," said the Chinaman, and several others gathered anxiously around to ask the meaning of the wonder.

"Say, you, does that thar monkey actually talk?" asked a solid-looking man.

"Well, sir, you heard him," replied Bob.

"But it's onnatural."

"I thought it sounded very natural," was Bob's quiet reply.

"Yes, but I say it's onnatural."

"I don't understand you, sir."

"Wall, how 'bout beasts torkin'?" the old fellow demanded, almost savagely.

"Oh, that's nothing."

"Nothin'! Say, young man, how du yu think yu feel?" he asked, looking Bob over in a careful, curious way.

"Oh, quite well, I thank you."

"But how about this thing, this—"

"What?"

"This torkin' monkey."

"Nothing strange about it, is there?"

"Wall, I should say there was."

"So should I."

"And so should I," said another.

Indeed, they all appeared to think that the business was somewhat wonderful.

"Oh, it is an easy thing to learn a monkey to talk if you only have the patience, and know how."

"Know how?"

"Of course, you must know how before you can teach them."

"Young feller, I'm pizened if I can understand it," said the old fellow, shaking his head.

"Well, you know that monkeys are the connecting link between man and the brute creation."

"What?" several of them exclaimed.

"The connecting link."

"What's a connecting link?"

"Why, don't you understand that we are all connected together?" asked Bob, seeing that he had a chance to get them on a string.

"Wall, I s'pose so. But what's that got tu do with monkeys?"

"What I mean to say is this: Scientists show conclusively that men and women were not created as they now are, but have developed up from lower animals; and as we are the highest of all the animals, it is but natural that those in the grade below us, such as the orang outang, chimpanzee, monkeys, and wild native Africans, should approach us in many things, such as the organs of speech, for instance. That is to say, those organs are undeveloped as yet, but with

time and patience they can be developed, as I have developed those of this animal."

"Youngster, you're too deep for me. Why, you tork like some o' them lawyers an' ministers I've hearn. Whar d'yu get it?"

"Get what?"

"Them thar big tork."

"Oh, we all talk that way in New York," replied Bob.

"What! whoop'er up with them big words all the time?"

"Certainly. Children five years old do it."

"Great snakes!"

"Fact."

"An' all know as much as yu do?"

"Some of them a great deal more."

"Oh, tell him ter give his chin a rest!" appeared to come from Muldoon.

Then there was a rousing laugh, in which they all joined, with the exception of the victim, and he blushed and grinned.

"Wall, I'll be everlastin'ly hornswaggled! That thar beats a royal flush," he muttered.

"Monkey makie muchie talkie. He no monk," said the Chinaman.

"What is he then?" demanded Bob.

"Lillie man allie slunk lup."

"Oh, you are jealous because he can use his tail better than you can," said somebody.

"Me no. Monkey too muchie chin-chin."

"Oh, feed an alligator wid him!" exclaimed Muldoon, and then the laugh completely squelched the somewhat fresh Celestial.

"Goshdarned if it don't sound jus like tork," said the old rooster, who had been so astonished.

"Make him do it some more," said another.

"Git out! Yer too fresh wid yer lip," cried the monk; and then there was another laugh.

"Say, what's yer name?"

"Moike Muldoon."

"Did yer ever vote?"

"Nor. They won't let me vote 'til I've shed me tail loike a tadpole."

"Oh, they insist upon it that you shall become an American citizen before voting, eh?" asked another.

"There's whar they have me be me short hair."

"Would you like to become a citizen?"

"I wud. I'd be an alderman in less nor a year."

"Me bly," put in the anxious Chinaman.

"What will you buy?" asked Bob.

"Me bly monk."

"What do you want of him?"

"Gives low; makie heap money."

"Oh, go show yerself!" exclaimed Muldoon.

"Me glive ten dollar, hup?"

"You go and buy a little cloth monkey; that will do well enough for you," said Bob.

"Yer a good 'nough monkey yerself," and the laugh which greeted him would have crushed anybody but a Chinaman.

Well, Bob kept this sort of a thing up until dark, amusing the children and astonishing the older passengers, who flocked around to get a look at the "talking monkey."

The news regarding him spread all over the boat in a very short time, and consequently Bob was the hero of the hour, although he fooled everybody with whom he came in contact, and to save their lives they could not swear that the monkey did not actually talk.

But presently he got tired, as did Muldoon, and so retired to his state room, leaving wonder and amazement behind.

The passengers talked the matter over long afterwards. None of them could account for the physical marvel they had witnessed, although the shrewdest of them maintained that there was some deception about it, some even hitting it correctly that there must surely be a ventriloquist about.

But the next morning Bob had another little snap for those occupying the state-rooms in his vicinity.

He worked the business out during the night, and just before daylight he placed a bell in Muldoon's paw, and stationing him outside, set him to ringing it with all his might and main.

The music evidently pleased the monkey very much, for the more he rang it the harder he rang.

Presently state-room doors began to open, and heads were shoved out to learn what the matter was.

"Breakfast ready!" several of them thought they heard the bell-ringer say.

"Breakfast thunder! What time o' day's this for breakfast?" yelled one passenger.

"Just been to supper, you idiot!" said another night-capped individual.

"Stop that infernal bell!" shouted another.

"Stop it!"

"Go to blazes!" and other little compliments were hurled at the placid bell-ringer, and then there followed the banging of state-room doors, and the smothered curses of those inside because they had been awakened so untimely.

Presently one of the night watchmen came along to where Muldoon was ringing the bell so earnestly.

Bob opened his state-room door so he might be able to defend Muldoon, or assist in his retreat, if it became necessary, or carry the fun still further, if he had a chance.

"Fut ther blazes are yees doin' here?" the watchman demanded, looking at the monkey.

"Breakfast ready!"

"Ther divil fly away wid yees! Breakfast won't be ready these two hours yet."

"Breakfast ready!"

Up to this point the watchman did not appear to suspect that the queer little monkey-man was talking, but when he repeated "breakfast ready," he was frightened out of his boots almost.

"Howly Mother!" he exclaimed, hastily crossing himself.

"Breakfast ready!"

"It's ther divil beyant a doubt!" he cried, and then started to run away as fast as his legs would carry him.

Bob called Muldoon, who at once stopped ringing the bell, and took refuge in his state-room.

In a minute, however, the captain, clerk, and several other officers of the boat came hurriedly into the saloon-cabin, led by the terrified watchman.

CHAPTER XXI.

"WHAT is this row all about?" demanded the captain of the *River Belle*, as he rushed into the cabin where Muldoon had been making such an uproar by ringing a bell at four o'clock in the morning and announcing that breakfast was ready, or rather, Bob Rollick had been doing the announcing while the monkey rang the bell.

"What do you mean, sir, by saying that the devil was in the cabin ringing the breakfast bell?" he asked, turning to the frightened watchman.

"Be me sowl, captain, but he was there but a moment ago," replied the watchman, again crossing himself devoutly.

By this time several of the cabin passengers had their heads out again.

"That's a fact, captain, I hearn him," said one old Westerner.

"What is a fact?"

"Yes, I seen him myself," said an old lady, whose night-capped head was thrust out of the state room door.

"You saw the devil!" asked the captain, looking at her in surprise.

"Yes, if that's what they call it."

"What nonsense! Somebody has been playing a trick on the passengers. The idea of the devil's being on board this boat! Go back to bed and wait for the breakfast gong. As for you, McCarthy, don't be quite so fresh or I'll have you keel-hauled," he added, turning and leaving the bewildered watchman standing there alone.

"Howly Moses!" mused Pat, when he found himself deserted.

He scratched his frowsy head, and glanced wildly around. To his mind there could be no mistake; he had seen the devil, or he had seen nothing at all.

"Too fresh, is it, I am? Be me sowl, I think the captain stands in no fear of the devil. But I do, begorra! Whew! I smell brimstone, so I do. Yes, I'm sure it was the divil himself, or one of his lumps. Faix, I'll quit the boat when we get to St. Louis, so I will!"

"Wha' de matter dar wid you?" asked a fellow-watchman, a darkey, coming up at this point. "Wha' you look so scar'd 'bout?"

"Scared! Be me sowl, I think you'd be scared, if ye'd seen what I did."

"Wha' dat you see?" asked the darkey, looking a trifle wild himself.

"Faix, an' I seen ther divil!"

"You did?" he exclaimed.

"Indade an' I did, roight beyant there, a-ringin' a bell an' callin' passengers to breakfast."

"Go 'way dar, Irish! Wha' you gib me?"

"I'm givin' ye plain facts. I seen him wid me own eyes, so I did."

"Go 'way dar!"

"Ax any av the passengers; sure they all seen him," replied Pat.

"Wha' he look like?"

"Sure, he had a tail."

"A tail!"

"An' he was dressed like a waiter."

"How big war he, Pat?"

"About so big," he replied, holding his hand to indicate Muldoon's height.

"Oh, go 'way dar!"

"Begorra, but I'm goin' when we get to St. Louis, so I am," replied Pat.

"Go way, I tole yer."

"An' don't I tell yer I'm goin'?"

"I don' mean dat."

"Then fut ther blazes do yer mane?"

"I means dat you din' see no debil."

"Fut der yees know about it?" demanded Pat, almost savagely.

"Why, din' I hean a sumon preacht on de debil onct? Cose I did."

"Well, fut av it?"

"I tole yer, chile, de preacher he say dat de debil am sixteen feet high; dat he hab two cloben hoofs an' a tail ten feet long wid a spear on de end ob it. Now, how he stan' up in dis yer cabin, hey?"

"Sure, an' he has ther power ter make himself any soize be loikes," replied Pat.

"Go way wid yer! You din' see no debil, I tole yer, or if yer did, it was only a little one fo' a cent," replied the darkey, walking away, unconvinced.

"Well, thin, begorra, he was big 'nough for me. He was all the divil I want," said Pat, walking away to the other side of the cabin and continuing his rounds.

Bob Rollick had, of course, overheard this conversation, and enjoyed it, of course.

As yet no one had tumbled to the thing, although the captain had come pretty near to it when he suggested that somebody had been playing a joke on the passengers.

So he allowed Muldoon to lay down and finish his night's sleep—a thing he was very fond of doing—while he himself got up, dressed, and walked out on the after deck.

The morning was breaking bright and beautiful upon the river and shores at either side, and the air was fragrant and cool with the breath of flowers.

One or two others were there ahead of him enjoying what is really the finest part of the day on a Mississipp-

in steamboat. Everything runs calm and still on board and all around, save the jarring whirr of the paddle wheels as they caught the water and forced the noble boat onward like a thing of life.

One man was there who appeared to be a minister or some other sharp, and he was expatiating upon the beauties which were coming so beautifully into view.

How he was chipping in the big words to a lady companion of his. Whew! Bob was obliged to catch his breath as the spouter went on.

"Oh, how glorious! Aurora stands tip-toe on the misty mountain top, welcoming the coming morn with the song of birds," said he.

"An' crowing hens!" said a voice that sounded just behind the speaker.

At this they became positively indignant, and wishing to show how smart he was, the flowery orator walked over to the other side of the deck to where there was an inoffensive looking Dutchman standing, gazing towards the shore, and quietly enjoying his pipe.

"Sir, did you remark anything just now?" he asked, touching him on the shoulder.

The surprised Dutchman looked up alarmed.

"Hey?" he asked.

"Did you say anything just now in answer to some remarks I was making?"

"Nine. Nix spraken Anglis," said he, but he immediately put his pipe in his pocket, evidently thinking that this was what was being asked of him, not understanding English.

Many of the passengers were acquainted, and they had not been seated many minutes before they began to laugh and talk about the joke, which somebody had played upon them by ringing the breakfast bell at four o'clock in the morning.

Bob listened and enjoyed it, as different ones made comments and expressed opinions as to how the thing was done. But of course he took no part in the conversation, being naturally a somewhat backward youth, never speaking unless he was spoken to. Of course not. Who ever knew a drummer who did?

But presently an old cock who sat next to him opened the ball.

"Did you hear about it?" he asked.

"About what?" asked Bob, looking up.

"Why, they say they've got a torkin' monkey aboard,



Just before daylight he placed a bell in Muldoon's paw, and stationing him outside, set him to ringing it with all his might and main. The music evidently pleased the monkey very much, for the more he rang it the harder he rang.

He turned and looked, but there was no one there. Then he and the lady exchanged glances of inquiry, and finally concluded they had only imagined it and that nobody had spoken.

Bob meanwhile was turned away, although standing not far from them, and of course looking entirely disinterested and innocent of all mischief.

The orator resumed, turning to his lady:

"Surely if ever there be voices in the circumambient envelope of the earth, commonly known as air, they are to be heard in the morning. Morning, sweet morning, how beautiful! Day seems like an infant just rousing from its slumber, and the rising sun like a loving mother coming to kiss it a welcome."

"Oh, yum, yum, yum!" sounded still another voice from behind them.

Again they turned and looked anxiously around them, and then at each other, as before.

They were evidently somewhat puzzled.

"Did you speak, Angella?" he finally asked.

"Dear me, no; it must have been that man standing over there," said she, blushing and pointing to a man on the opposite side of the deck.

"It doesn't seem possible that he could have heard me speaking," he replied, and then for a few moments he spoke in a lower tone.

But he gradually raised it until Bob was again enabled to overhear him.

"Yes, how the god of nature smiles! How this invention of man plows its way through the rippling waters, mighty in itself; but yet how puny in comparison with the vast works of the Creator, which we see all around us. The mightiness of this wonderful river; the irresistibility of the wind—even though it coos and sighs now like a birdling among the flowers—everything is beautiful, grand and powerful. There is music in every sound which greets our ears—"

"Yes, even a pig's squealing!" came in still another tone of voice.

"Do you pretend to tell me, sir, that you cannot speak English?"

"Nine. Spraken ze Deutcher?"

"The man didn't say, 'Oh, go to thunder!' but he turned around as though he thought it.

Going back to his lady they were both of them even more puzzled than ever. What could be the meaning of it?

"Oh, George, I am afraid somebody is making fun of us," said she, with about half a sigh.

"I'd like to see anyone do it."

"Let's go to some other part of the boat."

"Well, Angella, but I'm not afraid."

"No, George, I know you are not, but I—I somehow feel nervous," said she.

"Oh, well, if you are nervous, my dear, I will accompany you anywhere. I will even hail a skiff and row ashore with you," said he, encircling her waist with his arm.

"George, you are so kind," said she, as they started to go.

"Oh, George!" exclaimed a voice behind them.

She gave a little scream but they neither of them looked around, knowing of course by this time that somebody was poking fun at them.

Bob who had been holding in all the while now gave vent to a laugh so hearty and loud that it caused the other passengers on the deck to look up at him and wonder what the matter was.

But by this time the early morning was well advanced, and passengers began to flock out on the deck for a dose of fresh air before going down to breakfast, and to learn what progress they had made on the journey during the night.

Bob went down to the kitchen and got some breakfast for Muldoon, who was still in his state-room, and by the time he had got him all settled, the breakfast gong rang, and a rush was made for the dining-cabin.

an' he rang a bell for breakfast this morning an' shouting people up."

"No, sir."

"No?"

"Oh you're a sucker!" the man on the other side of him seemed to say, although to all appearance he was attending strictly to business, and trying to get the best of the steamboat company in the matter of grub.

The old fellow looked at him savagely.

"Did you make a remark, sir?" he asked.

"Me? Yes. This steak is tough as blazes," the man replied, sawing away at his "cow."

"No, sir, you were pleased to make a personal allusion to myself."

"You? who are you?" he asked, without looking up at all.

"I'll proceed to let you know who I am if you are not more civil with your tongue," said the indignant passenger, getting red in the face, and attracting general attention.

"Say, what's the matter with you, anyway? Bad digestion?" asked the cool passenger, laying down his knife and fork, and looking up at him in a half comical way.

"No, sir, but you had the impudence to call me a sucker just now, sir."

"Me?"

"Yes, you."

"Are you off?"

"No, sir, I am from."

"From a lunatic asylum?"

"No, sir, and you are a blackguard."

"Oh, I am, eh? I wish I knew you were not from a lunatic asylum. I'd poke you in the nose."

"No, you wouldn't!"

"Yes I would. Bring me a certificate of your sanity, and I will pull your nose, or punch it, I'm not particular which."

"Gentlemen, this will not do, there are ladies present," said the head waiter, leaning over between them.

"But he insulted me; he called me a sucker," protested the first.

"If you persist in that statement, I will call you a liar. I've had my mouth too full of grub all the while to talk."

"Come out on the deck and I'll swell that meat trap of yours so that you cannot get a shrimp into it."

"Wait till I have got my money's worth of grub, and then I'll have a little exercise with you, my dear sir, but I never take exercise on an empty stomach," said the cool passenger, and by this time those at the table had become so much interested in him that they laughed heartily.

But presently he began to tire, and to sigh for some fun. It had been quite a while since he had had any, and he began to grow hungry for some.

Finally he passed a saloon, in front of which stood a one horse cab. The poor old horse looked sick, and yet partially happy, on account of a stop, which enabled him to get a little rest.

The driver was inside, putting other things inside, and a sudden conceit took Bob that here was a chance to have some fun.

Muldoon had a hat on, and was otherwise fixed to represent a driver.

So he placed him upon the driver's seat, and put the lines in his hands. Mul knew his business well enough to obey orders, for Bob had taught him all this, and he obeyed on this occasion like a major.

veyance—liable to get a lady for a passenger—the idea of their being in such a condition as this. Come back into the saloon and take some castor oil."

"Murder, Billy, I've got 'em!" cried the cabman, glaring wildly at Muldoon.

His friend winked at Bob—in fact, they swapped winks.

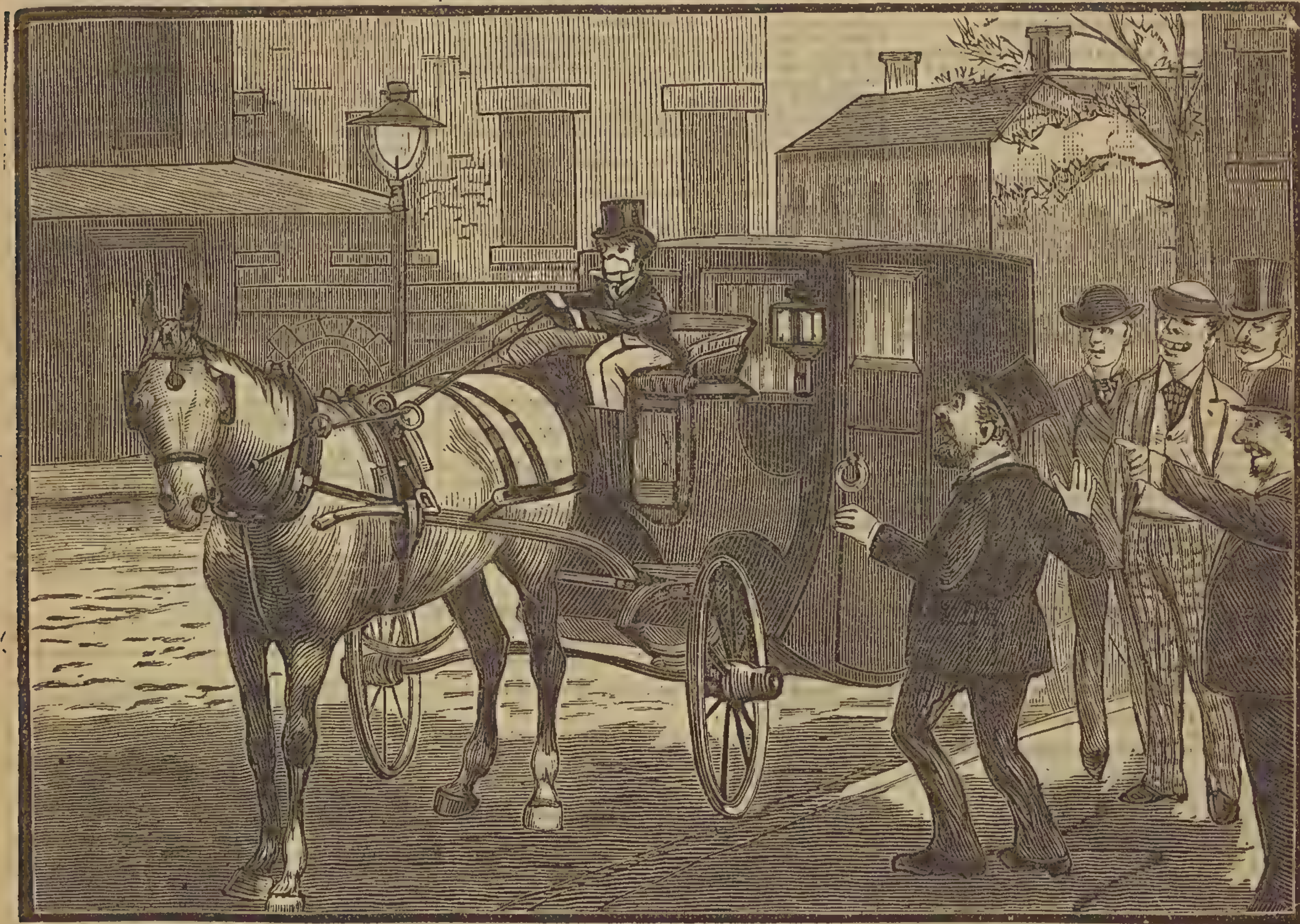
"Come in here, I'll fix you all right, if you'll only swear to swear off."

"Oh, I'll do anything!"

"All right. Come along."

The cabman followed with fear and trembling; he had been told before that something dreadful would happen him if he did not stop drinking—and now it seemed the prophecy was being fulfilled.

Bob took Muldoon down from the seat, and placing



A queer thing was up on his seat. With a look of astonishment he started back with an exclamation of alarm. "Cab, sir?" the little driver seemed to ask. "Howly Moses!" "Have a cab?"

The irate passenger felt a trifle taken aback, but he was still indignant and wanted to fight.

The placid passenger wanted to fight, if he fought at all, on a full stomach.

The situation was comical, but it did not calm down the irate passenger.

Bob was enjoying it all, you bet, and yet he seemed as honest as McGinniss' pig, so far as looks was concerned.

But matters finally quieted down and there was no further row or threatened bloodshed. Bob letting up on the racket for fear of being detected, as he observed a man sitting opposite who seemed to tumble to the racket.

Well, about noon the boat arrived at St. Louis, and after the long confinement on board, the passengers were glad enough to get ashore and go about their business.

Bob took a carriage and was driven to Barnum's Hotel, where he took a room for himself and his traveling companion, Muldoon.

Here he found a case of samples, together with friendly letters and letters of instruction from his employers, and what was quite as welcome, a month's salary and his commissions, which amounted to a good round sum, while a box from his adopted mother brought many useful articles and tokens of remembrance.

He concluded not to attempt any business until the next day, and after he had arranged things, he took Muldoon out for an airing, and to see the city.

Muldoon was dressed similar to the way he was when he personated Alderman Muldoon, at Chicago, as will be remembered.

Of course he attracted more or less attention, as he walked along especially from boys and girls, but he kept right on, taking in all he saw.

After being fixed, there he sat upon the driver's seat, and, of course, attracted much attention from those who passed along the sidewalk. Indeed, before many minutes, there was a crowd around the carriage, watching the queer spectacle.

Queer it was indeed, that diminutive driver, perched upon the seat, holding the reins, while Bob Rollick did the talking for him, asking people if they would have a cab.

There was considerable fun had before the tipsy cabman heard about it, and then he came from the saloon to see what was up.

A queer thing was up on his seat. With a look of astonishment he started back with an exclamation of alarm.

"Cab, sir?" the little driver seemed to ask.

"Howly Moses!"

"Have a cab?"

That astonished cabman turned to one of his friends in alarm.

"Say, Bill, have I been drinking too much?"

"Cab, sir?"

"Do ye hear it?"

"Nick, I guess you are off," said his friend.

"But don't you see it?"

Now this friend of his tumbled to the racket, and pretended that he saw nothing.

"Nothing up there on my seat?"

"Cab, sir?"

"Do you hear that?"

"What?"

"He asked me if I would have a cab."

"Nonsense! I tell you you are away off."

"But what's that on my seat?"

"Nothing."

"Bill, is that so?" he asked, gravely.

"Of course. What you want to do is to stop just where you are. The idea of the driver of a public con-

him under his coat, went into the saloon to, see the fun.

And fun there was, for that "Bill" he proved to be one of the boys, a regular racketeer.

He knew that Bob had put up the job, and that he was one of the boys, but he made up his mind to carry it out. So he ordered some castor oil and gave a big dose of it to the sad and groaning cabman, who swore with all the earnestness he had, that he would never touch a drop of ardent spirits again, so long as he lived.

They made him swear it as they dosed him, and then he went home, the sickest and limberest man that ever was, while his friend "Bill" drove the sorrowful old nag.

CHAPTER XXII.

BOB ROLLICK enjoyed this last racket as much as any he had ever started; but after it was all over he returned to his hotel with Muldoon.

The next day he was to commence business, but that night he made up his mind to go to a St. Louis theater, and see how much they differed from those in other cities.

But nothing of any importance transpired during the evening, and on his return to the hotel it looked very much as if he would have to go to bed without having any special fun.

And this, the reader knows, was not his style, if he could help it. He wasn't that sort of a cat.

He finally took a seat out on the balcony, where several others were seated, and began to pipe them off.

It was a warm night, and no one not a salamander thought of sleeping, and there they sat smoking, thinking and talking in an undertone, at a general thing, but one or two chaps were doing some pretty loud talking.

One fellow was talking about a fishing excursion he had been on, and the stories he told were very hefty.

"Trout!" he exclaimed. "You fellows don't know anything about trout. Why, up in the Yellowstone country I saw what you might call trout-fishing."

"How was it?" asked one of the company.

"How was it? Well, high, I should say."

"But how high?"

"In what way?"

"Well, as regards the trout. How big a trout did you ever see taken there?"

"Well, gentlemen, I don't wish to posture as a liar or a fish story-teller; but I am willing to tell you about the fish I have seen taken in the Yellowstone country, provided I am not laughed at or geyed," said the first speaker, with much earnestness.

"All right. Go ahead," said one.

"Certainly," said another.

"No; you fellows are only kidding me!"

"How?"

"Well, the story I have to tell is a big one, and don't you forget it. But I am no sucker. What I say I can prove, and I don't want any nonsense over it."

"All right; go ahead."

"And no nonsense?"

"Nary. What is it?"

"About trout."

"Well, what have you seen?"

"Seen! I say, boys, here's where the tough part comes in."

"What tough part? I didn't know there was any tough part to a trout, with the exception of the tough part of catching him," said one fellow, laughing.

"No; what I mean by the tough part is in reference to your capacity for taking in the truth."

"Truth! truth in connection with a fish story!" exclaimed two or three.

"Certainly. I propose to tell the truth, but so big and grand is it that I fear you may suspect my veracity."

"Oh, no. I make it a point never to doubt for an instant anything I hear in the way of a fish story," said another of the party.

"Oh, go on. Tell us about it."

"Well, this is up in the Yellowstone country, remember, where everything grows grand and large. Nature seems to do her best work in that locality. In fact, it appears to have been her original workshop, where, after doing her best for home ornamentation, she scattered a few inferior odds and ends of ornamentation through various parts of the world just to fill up and take the raw edges off."

"Oh, come off yourself, and give us that fish story," cried one of the party.

"Yes, yes!"

"Well, gentlemen, what I have said was only a sort of rhetorical introduction, the sole object of which was to prepare your minds for what is to follow."

"Getting us on a string, so to speak."

"Nonsense! you fellows are too just before. But what I proposed to tell you about is the trout found in the lakes and streams of the Yellowstone country. I have caught trout there that weighed forty-four pounds six ounces."

A concert of exclamatory whistles greeted this assertion.

"It is a fact, gentlemen."

"What sort of a trout—salmon?"

"No, sir—a regular brook trout."

Then followed shouts of ridicule and laughter from everybody seated on the veranda, irrespective of acquaintance.

"All right, gentlemen. I told you that I should not be believed," said the story-teller, shrugging his shoulders.

"But how do you take trout of that big weight?" some one ventured.

"Well, it usually takes two men to each line. They can't use a rod, of course, but simply a line and float, and then they have to drown them before they can land them. Now you may not believe this story; but I assure you, gentlemen, that I have seen it."

"Don't they catch any that weigh just forty pounds?" asked Bob, who had become much interested in the fish story.

"I dare say. But why do you ask?"

"Simply for information, for you were very particular to state that this one weighed forty-four pounds six ounces," replied Bob, whereat all hands laughed again. "Do they catch any that weigh less than forty-four pounds?"

"Oh, yes. I've seen them taken that weighed only thirty pounds," replied the champion.

"And what do they tempt them with—a fly?"

"No. Trout of that size won't notice a little thing like a fly. They use vampire bats for bait mostly, although they will sometimes take a live frog." And then, after receiving encouragement in the shape of another laugh, he turned to Bob, and asked: "By the way, perhaps you have caught trout weighing more than those I have spoken of?"

"No, sir; I never caught a brook trout that weighed over twelve pounds," replied Bob, looking as honest as a hen.

"Twelve pounds! well, I should call that a pretty good-sized fish," suggested the Yellowstone champion.

"Well, yes; but it wasn't the size of the fish that was the most remarkable," said he; and, noting his honest, earnest look, they all drew their chairs around him, each one seeming to feel that Bob was a good one.

"What was the peculiarity?" one of them ventured to ask.

"The peculiarity, gentlemen, was in the brook from which I hooked him."

"I don't seem to catch on if the trout did," said another.

"Well, it isn't a long story; the peculiarity was in

this: the stream was only two inches deep," replied Bob, as calm as a clam.

The company exchanged glances, and then shook hands with each other and then with Bob.

"That yanks the bun!"

"Where are you now, Dick?" asked one of them of the liar of the Yellowstone, and then there was a still wilder laugh and a general invitation to have a smoke.

Bob Rollick had once more taken the cake, and of course he became favorite right away. An exceedingly pleasant evening was spent, and a hope expressed at parting that they might meet again.

The next day Bob began to go about with his samples to drum up trade, and before night he came across one of the party at the hotel, who was doing a large trade in his very line.

This of course resulted in his getting a large order, and the young merchant and younger drummer became fast friends. Bob asked him to visit him at the hotel, and to invite any of his friends whom he saw fit, and that he would try to make it pleasant for them.

This invitation was gladly accepted, and about half a dozen young merchants and professional men paid Bob a visit that night in his room.

Muldoon was in undress uniform, and looked almost like a piece of comic animal statuary, as he sat half-dozing upon the bureau.

Indeed, none of the visitors appeared to regard him in any other light, but finally one gent, by the name of Whack, walked up to what he thought to be an ornament merely.

"This is very life-like, Mr. Rollick; is it yours?" he asked, going towards the monkey.

"Yes," replied Bob.

"As natural as life itself," continued Mr. Whack, attempting to place his hand on Mul's head.

But Muldoon didn't appear to be in very good humor, and when Whack attempted to place his hand upon his head, he opened his ugly mouth, and showed a set of healthy teeth.

Mr. Whack started back in alarm.

"Why, it's alive!" he exclaimed.

"You bet I am!" Bob made Muldoon say, at which the entire party started to their feet.

"What does this mean?" asked Bob's merchant friend, Mr. Johnson.

"Gentlemen, I beg pardon. I forgot to introduce to you my room-mate, Mr. Muldoon," said Bob, apologetically.

This caused them to look even more astonished than before.

"Gud avenin', gintlemen," said Muldoon.

"Holy Moses!"

"Pinks and posies!"

"Great Scott!"

"Red hot!" and various other exclamations were indulged in by the wondering company.

"How is it, anyway?" asked Johnson.

"Oh, it enjoys good health," said Bob, with the utmost calmness.

"Undoubtedly; but what I meant was, how is it that a monkey talks?"

"Don't you see?"

"No, I'll be hanged if I do. I never heard of such a thing before. How is it?"

"Nothing much; only a talking monkey."

"But I never heard of such a thing. Where did you graft on to it, Bob?"

"In Boston. Bought it of an Italian sailor who got it somewhere on the Amazon."

"Good gracious!"

"A talking monkey!"

"Soy!" cried Muldoon. "Aren't yees goin' ter set 'em up?"

This provoked another outburst of laughter and exclamations of surprise.

"You will of course excuse him," said Bob.

"What does he mean?"

"Oh, nothing, only he has a weakness for champagne, and with an ivory cheek expects all my friends to treat him."

"Wonderful!"

"But don't mind him."

"Begorra, but I don't think they have the price av a drink," cried Muldoon.

Then of course there was another laugh.

"Be quiet, Muldoon! Haven't I told you many times that you should not be rude to people?"

"But them's dead beats."

"Shut up!" and then, with the most consummate art, he turned to his guests and added: "I trust you will excuse him."

"Oh, certainly," said they all.

"That's chaper than tratin' me."

"You are right, Muldoon," said Mr. Johnson, seizing the bell-cord.

But Bob of course did not intend that his guests should pay for anything, for he had fixed it with the clerk beforehand that whatever was ordered to his room should be charged to him.

But Mr. Johnson was determined to treat Muldoon, and when the waiter brought up the champagne and poured it out into the glasses, there was a special one for Muldoon, one that Bob carried around with him.

It was a very small glass—what is called a "pony"—but the monkey was used to it and knew how to handle it. Indeed, he had become a great lover of champagne, and would, if not prevented, drink enough of it to make him blind.

"Here's lukin' at yees, gintlemen," he said, after Bob had placed the glass in his paw.

"Well, Mr. Muldoon, here's your very good health," said Johnson.

"Gobble it!"

This business all made a laugh, but what the meaning of it was they could not swell their heads enough to make out.

They talked it over, and Bob kept making the monkey talk for their amusement and wonder, and yet he would not give it away.

"But I don't understand it," said Johnson. "He appears to talk so far as sound goes, but he does not move his lips. How is it?"

"Oh, of course you could not expect a monkey to talk in the same way as a human being," said Bob, smiling.

"Ah, young man, think there is a trick about this business somewhere," replied Johnson.

"And so do I," said Mr. Whack.

"Well, gentlemen, if there is, why don't you discover it?" asked Bob.

"That's the how and why, but at the same time I suspect there is a trick."

"And you are right. Isn't he, Muldoon?"

"He is," replied Muldoon.

"Are they sold?"

"They are, bad."

"Where is the racket?"

"O'm a monkey an' ye're a ventriloquist."

"Ah! that's it!" exclaimed Johnson, seizing Bob by the hand. "I see it now."

With a loud laugh and many a hand-shake they all declared that they "could see it now," and more refreshments were ordered.

"Good lick! And so you are a ventriloquist, are you?" asked Whack.

"Can't yees hear for yerself?"

"Good boy. The best isn't too good for you. Name everything you want."

They laughed and laughed, congratulating Bob on the success of his racket, and he, to please them, gave various imitations, and established himself as a first-class ventriloquist in their estimation.

Meanwhile, Muldoon was sitting on the dressing-table looking as demure as ever.

But the champagne they had given him had evidently gone to his head and made him a trifle sleepy.

Presently Mr. Whack thought he would have some fun with Muldoon.

Going up to him he began to tickle him with a straw, which "funny business" did not exactly please his nibs.

"Hello, Mr. Muldoon, how are you feeling this evening?" he asked.

To this of course Muldoon made no reply, as he of course could not without Bob did so for him, but it was evident that he did not like to be teased by a stranger.

Bob knew that it was vexing him, and he also knew that he would resent it, and hoping to have some fun out of it, he did not warn him against it.

"How's your head, old man?"

Muldoon opened his mouth, not for the purpose of giving him a chance to look into his head to ascertain how it was, but to warn him of his objections to being fooled with.

"You are one of the gang, ain't you, old man?" he asked again, accompanying the question as before with the straw-tickling business.

Muldoon seized the straw savagely, and twisted it into shreds in a twinkling.

But this only raised a laugh, and caused the rest of the company to become interested in the sport.

Yes, it was very sporty.

The funny man got another straw, and again commenced to worry Muldoon.

"I say, old man, are you a drummer?" he asked, again worrying him.

Muldoon was not a drummer. He was a high private.

He began to run around the table and to snarl savagely, all of which only made the company laugh the heartier.

"What's the matter with you, old man? Didn't you like the champagne? Don't your hash set good on your stomach?" he asked.

Muldoon could stand it no longer.

Jumping up on a bureau, he seized Bob's self-cocking revolver.

"Look out!" cried Bob, seeing that there was danger in the movement.

"What's the matter, Muldoon?" asked the teaser.

Quick as a flash Muldoon pulled the trigger and fired a shot into the wall.

Then there was a yelling, and a rush made for the door, while Muldoon kept banging away.

Shot after shot he fired in rapid succession, while the visitors were getting out of the way.

Bob Rollick was as fast for getting into a place of safety as any of them were, for although Muldoon took no aim with the pistol, yet he was flourishing it around in a very dangerous manner.

But he waited until he heard the seventh shot fired, and then rushed back into the room.

It was filled with smoke, and there were evidences of shooting on every side.

Muldoon was yet standing upon the table, holding the smoking revolver in his hand, and occasionally pulling the trigger. But as the cartridges had all been exploded, there could, of course, be no further danger.

Going directly to him he disarmed him quickly, at the same time giving him a slap, and then thrusting him back into his cage.

The firing had, however, raised a great sensation in the hotel. Some cried murder, and everybody rushed out of their rooms to learn the cause of the firing, while Bob's visitors crept carefully back into the room.

Other people in the neighborhood came timidly to the door and peered in.

"What has happened?" they all asked, and it took Bob some time to explain that his pet monkey had been at play with a toy pistol, but that no harm had been done and no blood spilled.

He finally got his door closed, and was alone with his frightened friends once more, although the scare was soon turned to laughter.

"What an escape!" exclaimed Johnson.

"Well, I'll be hanged!" said Whack.

"Hanged? You'll be shot if you don't stop fooling with that monkey," said another.

"Gentlemen, I am sorry that this thing happened, but, the fact is, *Muldoon* has got a bad temper, and if he is fooled with by a stranger he is apt to pull his pop," said Bob.

They all enjoyed a hearty laugh over the unexpected event. It was quite as big a surprise to Bob as it was to any of the party, and now he began to figure up the expense.

There had been a mirror shattered, a hole made in a fancy wardrobe, a bullet received in the center of an oil-painting, and several others in the walls of the room.

It wasn't half a joke after all.

But he pretended not to mind it, and after parting with his guests, he sat down and enjoyed a good laugh, thinking of how *Muldoon* had got the drop on them all, and what time they made getting out of range of that flourished revolver.

And yet, in spite of *Muldoon's* being an expensive pet, he felt that he could hardly get along without him. The fun that he could and did work out of him was more than the cost, after all.

So he retired to rest that night just as happy and smiling as though there was no settlement to be made on account of his last racket.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Bob remained in St. Louis for a whole week, doing good business and having heaps of fun.

Indeed, his business and popularity were greatly increased by an account which was published in the *Democrat* of the whole affair, as recorded in the preceding chapter.

Bob Rollick and his monkey, *Muldoon*, became the talk of the city, but because the account published gave it away that he was a very clever ventriloquist, he did not have the same amount of fun that he would have had had it not been given away.

He had, however, some fun with a colored boot-black at the hotel which went a great ways as compensation.

This old coon had long held the position of boot-black at the hotel, and everybody knew him who ever went there, for he was a character beyond a doubt.

Black as one of the boots he had shined, his hair was quite white, and in all respects he was an elegant specimen of a Southern darkey.

But "Pete" was a general favorite, in spite of the fact that many practical jokes were played upon him by the younger employees around the hotel—people of his own color—and at the time of Bob's visit there he was said to be quite well off.

But the peace of the old man's mind had shortly before that been fractured on account of a rival darkey who had set his chair and planted his box only a short distance away from him. It worried him terribly, and while Bob was there he found out about it.

Taking a seat in the old shiner's chair, Bob proceeded to interview him, while the gloss was being administered to his foundations.

"Well, Pete, how are you feeling this morning?"

"Boss, I 'se feelin' jus' 'bout as good as dey makes ole men. How war yerself?"

"Oh, I'm all right. How is shining this morning?"

"Boss, business am flourishin'."

"Glad to hear it, Pete. But how about that young fellow who has started in opposition to you?" asked Bob.

"Oh, he's no good," said the old man, vehemently.

"Indeed?"

"Dead N. G."

"Don't he shine very well?"

"Jus' can't get no gloss on 'tall, boss."

"Sort of amateurist, eh?"

"I don't know what dat is, boss, but he am 'de wuss I ever seen," replied Pete.

"Oh, you shut up, you ole fraud!" Bob made the rival boot-black to say.

Pete stopped his shining, and glanced over his shoulder at his rival.

"Better not gib me none ob your sass," said he, finally and savagely.

"Wha' de matter wid yе, ole man?" asked the rival, looking tragedy at him.

"Chile, I'll tol' yer what's der matter wid me, if I learn any mo' ob yer sass. You jus' mine yer own business, an' let all gemmen 'lone," said Pete.

"Dat's my racket, ole man. I neber speaks to nobody but gemmen; but I didn't spoke to you!" said he, severely.

"Wha' dat you jus' say to me?" demanded the old man, straightening himself up.

"Neber said nuffin to yer, ye ole crank."

"Don't tork ter me dat way, boy, o' I shall harm yer," replied Pete, slowly resuming his work.

As for the other shiner, he didn't appear to catch on to the other fellow's meaning, but he caught on to a customer just then, and so paid no further attention to him.

"Wha's the matter with that chap?" asked Bob.

"He? He's got mo' gail dan a mule. He amn't satisfied wid comin' yer an stealin' my customers, but zibs me sass besides. But I 'se goin' fo' to learn him a lesson befo' long," replied the indignant old darkey.

"Shut up, you ole crank!" was what he thought he heard him say again.

Dropping his brush, Pete walked over to his rival's stand, and patted him in the nose.

"Dar, take dat. I done tole yer dat dat 'crank' would fly roun' an' hit yer bime by."

"You just stop a hittin' me for nuffin," whined the other fellow.

"Well, I hits you fo' somethin' next time yer calls me mo' names, an' don't you uncork you memory bottle on it nether."

"You jus' go way an' let me be. I warn't doin' nuffin to you."

"Yes, yer did."

"What I do?"

"You dun call me ole crank?"

"I didn't say nuffin, only when you jus' holler 'ter me dat time."

"Yes, yer did."

"No, I didn't."

"Oh, shut up, and go about your business," said the customer, indignantly.

"All right, boss, only he wants ter keep his tongue orf me or I'll bust him in der snout," replied Pete.

"Go back to your customer."

"All right, only he wan' ter keep dem big, thick lips pushed up 'bout me, I tole you," said Pete, again returning to Bob, who was enjoying the racket hugely.

"Well, I see you pated him."

"Jus' bet I did, boss. I don't 'low no coon ob his 'mensions to swing his lather-brush on me, no how," he said, resuming work.

"That's where you are right," replied Bob.

"Wah! he's a no good nig, anyhow. Don't know any mo' 'bout shinin' gemmen's boots dan a crow. He habn't got de style 'bout him; he neber had no edercation in de business; he's a pufic ignoramus at de professun."

"Shut up, you ole ham!"

"Oh, I fix you for dat bimeby," growled Pete, shaking his fist at the other darkey.

"You can't fix nobody!"

"Oh, you jus' keep on foolin' wid dis yer mule, an' bimeby you heah somethin' drop."

"Oh, you're no good!"

"Keep on wid you dangerousness, honey," replied Pete, finishing Bob's first shoe. "I took no mo' notus ob yer till I get dis yer job off my han's, an' den look out!"

As he tackled Bob's other shoe, that joker gave a quick imitation of the barking of a dog close behind the old darkey, and he leaped to his feet in alarm.

"Shoo! go 'way dar!" he cried, looking and striking around with his brush, but of course seeing nothing. "Whar dat dorg?" he finally asked, turning to Bob.

"Ran away, I guess."

"Golly, dat am queer," he mused, as he got upon his knees again to resume work.

"Guess you done got 'em, ole man," the other darkey seemed to say.

"Guess you done git 'em bimeby," muttered Pete, as he worked away sullenly.

Again Bob imitated the dog, and again that darkey leaped to his feet and struck out lively all around him, cursing and ordering his tormentor to "go way dar."

"What's the matter with you, Uncle Pete?" asked Bob, who was nearly bursting with the laugh ter he was trying to suppress; for of all the comic 'nigger acts" that he had ever seen this one took the cake.

"Whar dat pesky dorg?" he asked, looking around in a mysterious, puzzled way.

"What's the matter with you and that dog?"

"Don't wan' him foolin' roun' me noways."

"Why, he isn't around you, Uncle Pete."

"Whar he am, den?"

"Away over there across the street—see?" asked Bob, pointing to a demure-looking purp that happened to be passing on the opposite way.

"Golly! sounded like he war clus ahind me."

"Guess you must be nervous this morning."

"He's got 'em for shuah," the other coon seemed to say.

"I broke you head afo' long," was Pete's reply, as he resumed his work.

"Better drink less whisky, ole man."

Pete made no reply to this. Indeed, he had grown suddenly thoughtful. It might possibly be a fact after all that he had been drinking too much, and it had made him nervous.

"Well, Uncle Pete, it does seem as though you had been drinking somewhat too much. Better swear off," said Bob.

"Fo' de Lord, boss, I don't drunk nuffin but a little beah fo' seberal days," he replied.

But as he spoke Bob began to imitate the grunting of a pig, and again did Pete look around with wonder and amazement. The idea of a pig being there was much more surprising than a dog barking.

"Wha' dat?" he asked, looking around, but this time without rising from his knees.

"What do you mean, Pete?"

"Dat yer shoat."

"Shoat! I hear no shoat," replied Bob, and then he gave another imitation somewhat louder, and so true to life that Pete stood up.

"Heah dat?"

"I hear nothing."

"Don't heah dat shoat a gruntin'?"

"Certainly not."

Pete could stand this no longer. He looked carefully around, and seeing no "shoat" he began to think there was certainly something wrong.

"Neber seen nuffin like it," he mused.

"No more did I, Pete; you have surely been drinking something stronger than beer," said Bob, reprovingly. "Wonder what you will hear next?"

"De good Lord only knows," he sighed.

"Haven't you been taking some hard stuff?"

"Wall, now, boss, my brudder he sent me a gallon ob de ole stuff from Kentuck."

"I thought so," replied Bob, seeing a chance for even more fun with the puzzled coon. "But you

want to chop off from that 'old stuff' from Kentuck, Uncle Pete."

"But I only taken one or two snootfuls."

"It must be pretty bad. Better give it up or send it to some enemy. But go on. I can't wait here all day for a shine."

Pete, without saying a word, but, thinking a heap, and seriously, began again upon his job. The other coon, in the meantime, had finished his customer and had caught another one, greatly to the disgust of the old shiner, who was still struggling slowly with Bob's understandings.

Just before he had finished, however, Bob nearly frightened the life out of him by giving a ventriloquial imitation of a sheep bleating behind the old coon.

He glanced around, and almost turned white as he did so.

"Come, hurry up; what's the matter with you?" demanded Bob.

"Did you heah dat mutton, boss?" he asked, turning anxiously to Bob.

"Nonsense! Finish your job and let me go. Why, you are the worst I ever knew. Now, I'll give you my advice, and that is to swear off and go light hereafter."

"Boss, I do dat werry caper. But, fo' de Lord, I don't gone heaby on dat yer rye," he said, as he finished his job and rose to his feet.

"Never mind, it is too hefty for you, Pete. Just swear right off, or you will be hearing all kinds of things. You can't stand it, old man," said Bob, handing him a dime for the shine.

"Spec dat am so, boss," he mused.

"Of course it is. You are getting too old. Now, just promise me that you will stick right to cold water for the remainder of your life."

"Boss, I neber will drink nuffin stronger."

"Swear it, Pete!"

"I swears it."

"Hold up your hand!"

"Dar am my flipper."

"That is all right. Now if you should ever break that oath you will be sure to hear and see all sorts of sights and sounds," said Bob, turning to leave him.

"Dat's all right, boss," replied Pete, and if Bob never did a good thing before, he did it on this occasion, for he frightened old Pete into being a temperance man and a good citizen.

Well, Bob finally got through with his business in St. Louis, and then made up his mind to visit Springfield, the capital of Illinois, about seventy-five miles from there.

But on the way thither there was a railroad accident. The engine and baggage-car were thrown from the track, the former badly ditched and crippled, and the latter set on fire and burned by the overturning of a stove.

The result was that the passengers lost all of their baggage, although no one was severely hurt by the accident.

And Bob Rollick lost all his samples, together with his sample trunks and clothing; indeed, he lost everything, as many others did, with the exception of the clothes he stood in.

Muldoon, however, escaped with his master, although badly frightened and shaken up.

There was a delay of several hours, and it was late at night when the train finally arrived at Springfield with its tired and disgusted passengers.

This was somewhat rough on Bob, for he would be obliged to telegraph to New York for new samples and trunks, and as he had spent quite a good deal of money at St. Louis, he had but little left.

It would certainly be a week or more before he could receive his things from New York, and he began to puzzle himself about what he should do for money in the meantime.

However, he braced up and went to the Leland House, where he registered like a little man, for if he temporarily lacked money, he never lacked its equivalent almost, that is to say, cheek.

That night he telegraphed his firm, giving an account of the accident that had befallen him, after which he had nothing to do but to wait until his new samples arrived before he could do any business.

He didn't like to telegraph for money, though, for he had already been paid up, and it would not look well. True, he might write to his adopted mother, Miss Gnarly, for money, and she would be sure to send it to him, but he didn't wish to let her know that he was spending so much money.

He wrote to her, however, giving her a full account of the accident, assuring her that he was all right in every respect, after which he began to think how he should kill time and not run behind while waiting for his samples.

Couldn't he work *Muldoon* somehow?

He thought the matter over for some time, and finally resolved on one of two things: either to give a ventriloquial exhibition with him, or dress him up and pass him off for a "midget," the smallest woman alive.

If he could procure a trailing dress, it would cover up his tail, and with a hat and veil he thought he could work it all right.

So he procured the material and had the dress made up, and in a day or so had *Muldoon* trained for the business, for it will be remembered that he had taught him many tricks which were very funny.

But the next thing to do was to get a place to exhibit his "curiosity" in, but he finally succeeded in finding a small hall that he hired cheap, and then he wrote the following announcement for the papers:

THE SMALLEST WOMAN ALIVE!

A HUMAN MARVEL!

Mons. Roberto Rollicko has lately returned from the wonderful tropical island of Ceylon, bringing with him

one of the many natural marvels which he found there, it being in the shape of a dwarf specimen of humanity, supposed by the celebrated naturalist to be about twenty years of age. These specks of humanity live in the luxuriant forests of Ceylon, and subsist upon nuts and fruit. They are exceedingly tractable, possessing the organs of speech, which with little trouble can be developed and language taught them, as it has been taught this specimen.

SHE HAS BEEN LEARNED TO TALK!

Indeed, she speaks the English language quite fluently, and will answer any simple questions that may be put to her.

DON'T FAIL TO SEE THE NATURAL CURIOSITY!

DON'T FAIL TO BEHOLD THE HUMAN WONDER!

On exhibition, for a short time only, at Smith-

"Ladies and gentlemen, after what I have said, the only thing that remains for me to do is to place this curious bit of human nature, this brunette with blonde hair, upon a table in front here, and allow you to ask her any simple question you may see fit, in order to satisfy yourselves that this is really one of the greatest curiosities that has ever been seen."

With this he placed *Muldoon* carefully upon a table in full sight of the audience, and smoothed out his trailing dress, so as to cover his tail. But he saw, although the others did not, that *Muldoon* was not a bit pleased with the arrangement. He didn't like that wig; it made his head hot, and he wanted to get out of it.

But Bob quieted him for the time being, and then held himself in readiness to answer any questions which might be asked by any of the inquisitive ones present.

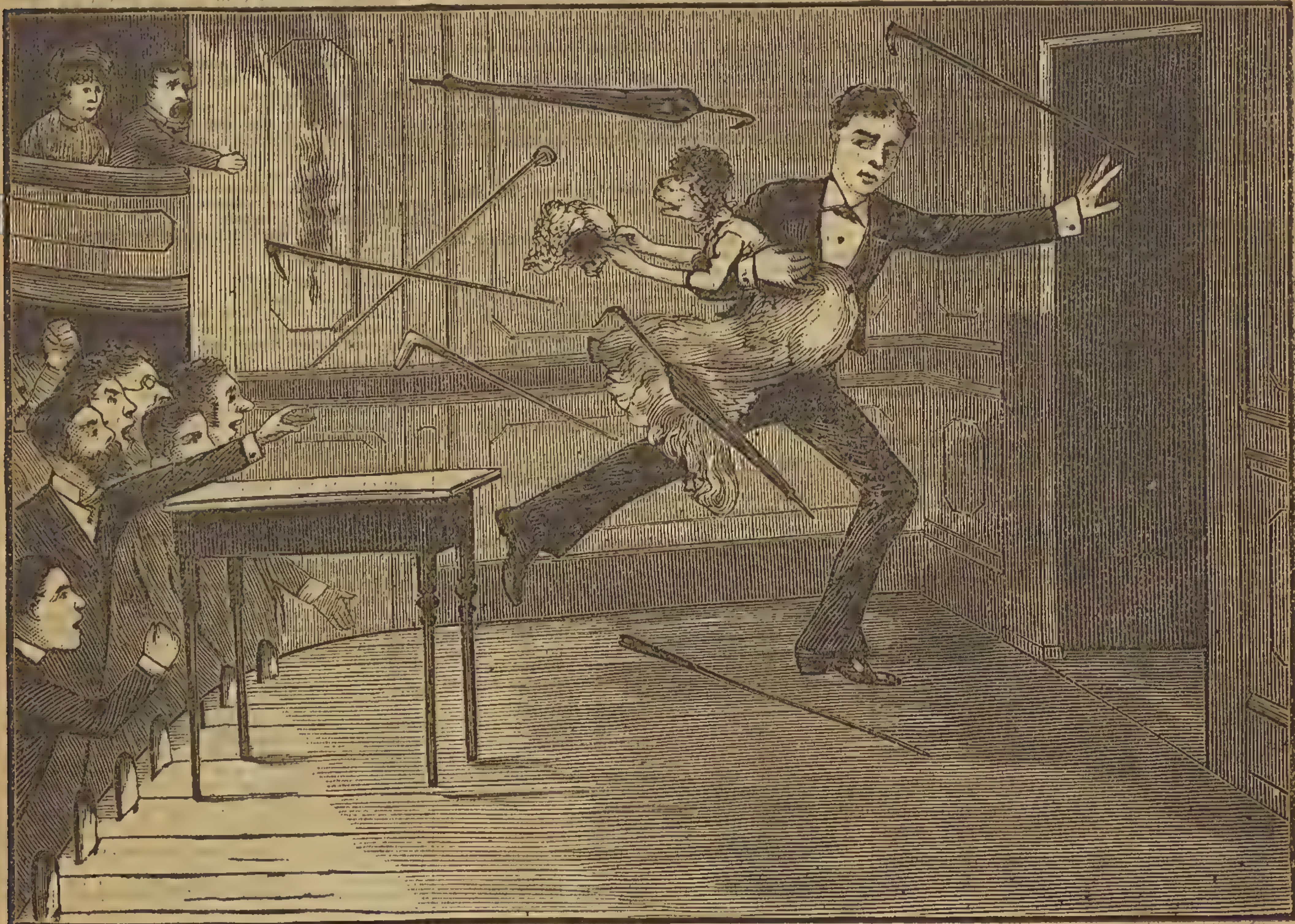
latch, and the way he did make tracks for his hotel was a caution.

Meantime the indignant people in the hall were clamoring to get their money back, and others again were trying to batter down the door out of which Bob had escaped, while still others were retiring silently or sullenly from the scene of the sell, glad to get out of sight.

But Bob managed to reach a cab that was standing not far away, and getting hastily into it was driven to his hotel without being particularly observed by any of his victims.

It was a close shave though, and he was glad enough to get under cover, as was *Muldoon*, who had become frightened by the uproar and the sudden "git up and git."

Hastily changing his clothes and getting himself up so as to look like another fellow almost, he ventured



Bob saw that his game was up, and so concluded to skip. He caught *Muldoon*, and started to go, but before he could reach the back entrance, a shower of canes, opera glasses, books, etc., fell upon him.

ers' Hall. Admission, 25 cents; clergymen and teachers, half price.

"I'll have fun and shekels out of this or perish," reused Bob, as he read the advertisement in the next morning's papers. "But I only wish some of the boys were here to catch on to it with me," he added, regretfully.

Well, everything was arranged, and Bob stood ready for what might follow.

The announcement proved a stunner, and the little hall he had hired wasn't half large enough.

There were gathered nearly all the scientific and curiosity-seeking people of Springfield to see this "human wonder," for Bob's "ad" had caught on splendidly.

Finally the hall was full and the hour for the exhibition had arrived, so Bob closed the doors and went upon the platform, taking *Muldoon* by the hand and leading him out before the astonished audience.

Well, he was enough to astonish them, for as he walked along in his trailing dress and curiously-shaped blonde wig, he did not stand over fifteen inches high, and was certainly a marvel.

The impression was emphatically a good one, for the people greeted him with exclamations of wonder and delight.

Bob was equal to the occasion, and after introducing his "marvel" to the assemblage, he gave a guy lecture on him, together with a history of these curious specimens of humanity, after which he showed him off with a song and a few snatches of conversation.

It was an immense hit, and the people applauded vociferously. Then Bob said:

Several were asked, and Bob answered them through the medium of ventriloquism, greatly to the wonderment of those in front.

One or two of the most fussy cranks wanted to examine the "wonder" scientifically, but Bob would not consent to it. He announced himself as willing to have a committee of experts indulge in a private examination in the interest of science, but not in public.

But just as he made that announcement, *Muldoon* pulled his blonde wig from his head, and stood before them as simply a monkey.

Then the people began to shout "fraud!" and to shake their fists at the exhibitor.

Bob saw that his game was up, and so concluded to skip.

He caught *Muldoon*, and started to go, but before he could reach the back entrance, a shower of canes, opera glasses, books, etc., fell upon him.

A dozen or more of the most indignant ones leaped upon the stage for vengeance, while Bob made all haste for the exit.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE indignation of the audience at Springfield, before whom Bob Rollick had exhibited *Muldoon* as a human marvel, the smallest woman on the top of the earth, was not to be restrained when the monkey got mad and pulled off his wig, thereby exposing the cheat.

But Bob had the money that the crowd had paid, and, with *Muldoon* under his arm, he slammed the stage-door after him, slammed it shut on account of a spring

down into the hotel office, expecting to hear somebody talking about the affair.

Nor was he mistaken, for excitement ran high, and several people were gathered in the office discussing the matter, some growling and others laughing at the sell that had been so cleverly played upon them.

"What was it anyhow?" asked one.

"And who is this Rollicko?" another one inquired.

"Well, he's a good one at all events."

"Who ever heard of such a thing?"

"Confound the fellow, he's got my quarter anyhow," said another growler.

"And so he has mine, but he's welcome to it, for I don't mind being sold cleverly, and that was one of the sweetest sells I ever experienced," said a more cheerful individual. "Why, it was only a monkey dressed up as a woman."

"But it talked."

"Talked! I'll bet you nine million dollars to nine cents that the fellow's a ventriloquist."

"A ventriloquist?"

"Yes."

"One of them chaps as throws their voice?"

"To be sure. The idea of a monkey talking!"

"That's so," mused the other.

"And for that reason I say he don't owe me a cent. I got my money's worth, and any other chap that kicks is a hog. He'd want a chromo with a ten-cent plate of hash. I say it was a very clever performance, and that chap, whoever he is, is no slouch, and don't forget to memorize it."

"Yes, but it was a fraud."

"What of it? It was an amusing one, and everybody got their money's worth. The monkey evidently got mad at that blonde wig, and pulled it off, and that

gave the whole business away. But, oh! how sick those scientific roosters must feel!" and he laughed in a way that showed he felt it.

"Well, it was a little funny."

"Funny! I'd like to know that Roberto Rollicko. I'll bet he is a good one," said the citizen, laughing.

Bob, who had overheard this and other bits of conversation, felt as though he would like to make the acquaintance of the generous and tickled citizen; but it would never do. There was too much indignation aroused, and the first thing he did was to consult a railroad time-table regarding the next train back to St. Louis, after which he telegraphed to his house in New York to forward his sample goods to him at St. Louis.

Then he quietly slid out of that town, and none too quick, for several indignant ones had gone to the police, and they were hunting for the fraud, Rollicko, in five minutes after he left.

friends of each boxer, my 'unknown' being desirous of remaining unknown. Money ready at Barnum's Hotel.

BOB ROLLOCK.

As might be supposed, this challenge created much excitement in St. Louis, and after being talked over for some time, Sullivan agreed to accept the challenge and the terms.

This was all right, for Bob had posted his friends and Sullivan's enemies as to what he proposed to do, and the upshot of the racket was that a large company of sports congregated at the hotel on the day the fight was to take place.

Bob, in the meantime, had procured a fighting costume for Muldoon, and trained him admirably in the art of boxing, so far as making a show of the business was concerned.

It was understood that the boxers were not to see or know each other until the word was given; when Sullivan was to come from his dressing-room into the room where the contest was to take place.

"Say, maybe some of youse chaffers'd like ter put on der mits with me," said Sullivan, with a wicked sneer.

"That's all right, gentlemen," said Bob. "This was arranged as a little joke, to make a little joke, and introduce us all to a little refreshment-table that awaits us in the next room."

"Oh, ho!"

"Ah, ha!"

"Yum, yum!"

"Very good!"

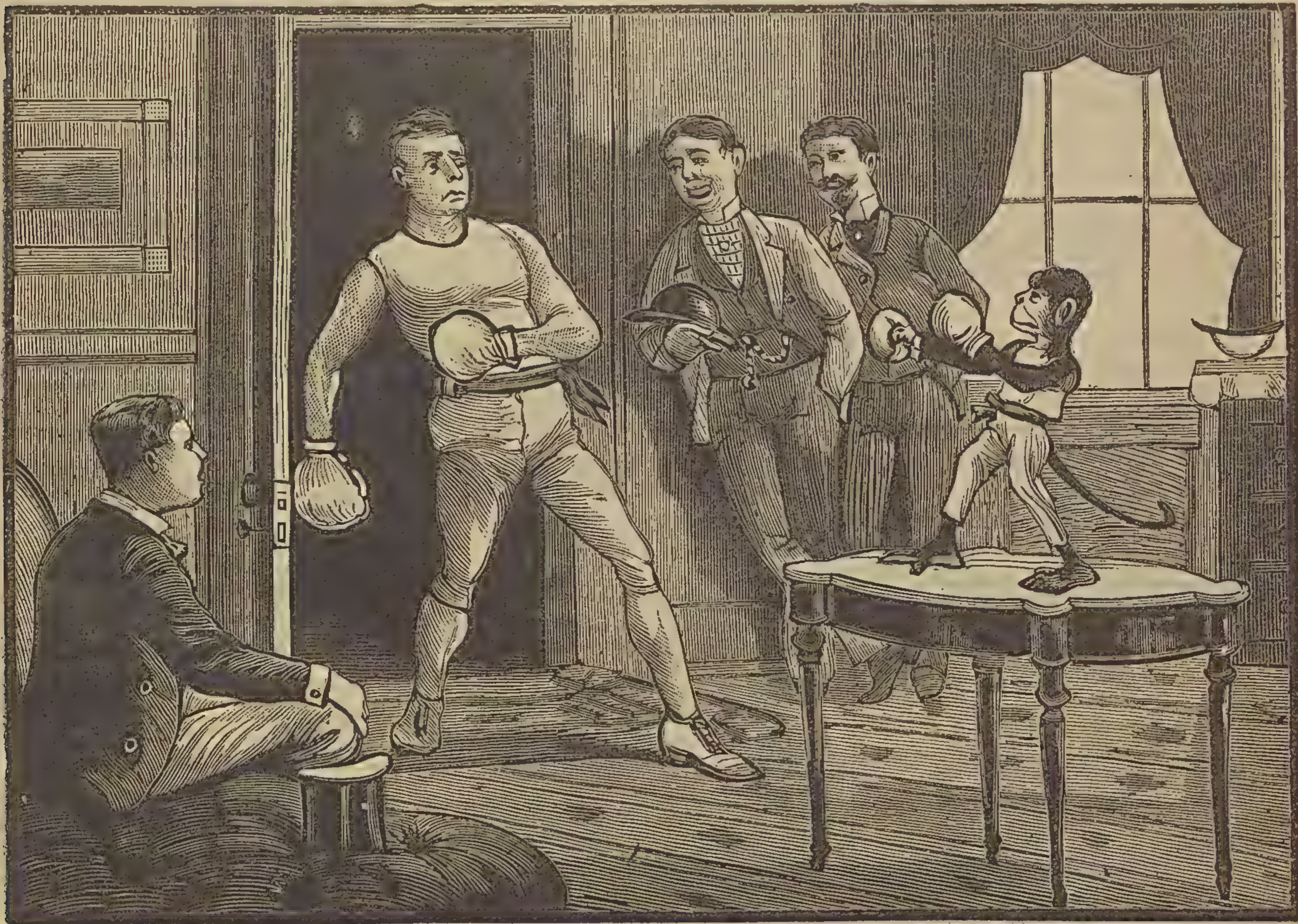
"We'll catch on."

"You bet," and other expressions of extreme satisfaction were heard on all sides.

"Right this way, gentlemen," said Bob, and he led them into the room where there was a very nice spread of refreshments.

That mob felt at home there, and just went in for all that they could catch on to.

"But, I say, how about it anyhow?" asked Sullivan,



Everything being arranged, Muldoon was placed upon a table, and Bob put him in a boxing attitude. Then the signal was given, and Sullivan, in full ring costume, strode into the room. "Where is he—where is yer man?" he demanded, looking around with a bad, bad expression.

And you bet he was glad enough to get back to St. Louis, for he had found it to be pretty nearly a boss town while he had remained there at Barnum's Hotel.

But he had several days on his hands to kill, and after laying out his future route, he scarcely knew what to do with himself, having seen all the ins and outs of the city during his former visit.

About that time, however, there was much talk regarding a "slugger" by the name of Sullivan, who had met with considerable success in three or four sets—he had taken part in with some of the niftiest boxers in the city, and finally his friends claimed that he could not be knocked out by any amateur walking on top of the earth.

By the way, this same slugger has lately been heard of in connection with a fight or two, and much more newspaper guff regarding what he could most undoubtedly do if he had a chance.

Bob heard much of this chin music, and a sudden thought took possession of him.

There was altogether too much brag and bluster about this fellow, and he concluded that it would be a good racket if he could only take some of the frills out of this slugging boxer.

So, after consulting with a few of his own friends, and having them in turn consult with the enemies and friends of Sullivan, Bob wrote the following challenge, which was published in the *Globe-Democrat*, as many will remember:

"CHALLENGE."

"One thousand to one hundred that I can produce an unknown amateur who can knock Sullivan out in two rounds. The only terms being that the boxing-match shall be in a private room, with only a few personal

About a dozen of Sullivan's enemies were present, and in his room he had about half as many of his personal friends.

Everything being arranged, Muldoon was placed upon a table, and Bob put him in a boxing attitude.

Then the signal was given, and Sullivan, in full ring costume, strode into the room.

"Where is he—where is yer man?" he demanded, looking around with a bad, bad expression.

"I'm here!" it certainly seemed that the little pugilist said.

Sullivan turned and looked at him, while a roar of laughter went up from the company.

"What!" exclaimed Sullivan, starting back in surprise.

"Come see me!" said Muldoon.

"Howly Moses!" cried the slugger, "what is it?"

"I'm yer lemon; squeeze me!"

"Is this yer 'unknown,' I like ter know?"

"Yes," said several, while the laugh rose high.

"A sell?"

"How's it look?"

"But what is it?" asked the bad, bad man, approaching Muldoon, who still kept his attitude.

"Try me!"

"Try you! What for?"

"A fight. I'm here."

"Well, I should say so! Why, boys, it's a monkey," he added, turning to his friends.

"But where's the fighter?" asked one of them.

"Fighter! Why, it's a sell; don't you catch on?" said Sullivan, and his enemies improved the opportunity by laughing louder than ever.

looking at Bob, after he had partaken of the refreshments.

"How about what?" asked Bob, looking just as honest and innocent as ever.

"Soy!" and the great pugilist looked him all over, "what's ther snap?"

"What snap?" asked Bob.

"Why, der monk, in there."

"I don't catch on."

"He tor ked!"

"Well?"

"How is it?"

"I give it up, Sullivan."

"No, yer don't. Now come off. How 'bout it?" asked Sullivan, attempting to be familiar.

"Give it to me straight."

"Well, I do."

"No; what's ther racket?"

"That monk."

"State your case."

"He seemed to tork."

"Oh, he's a talker all the time."

"How is that?"

"Because he's a talker."

"Now look here, young feller, you've played me for a sucker, an' got the dead wood on me, but I won't have any more. How about that monkey of yours?"

"Oh, he's regular."

"But the tork he give me?"

"That's regular, too."

"But I've got ter catch on."

"Well, why don't you?"

"I don't see an opening."

"That's not my fault."

"Oh, come off!" cried Sullivan, impatiently.
 "Off what?"
 "Yer racket. I'm a tough, and don't want any nonsense. Tell me all about ther snap."
 "That monk?"
 "Cert."
 "Oh, he's a cuss."
 "I should say so. But how is it?"
 "Would you like to interview him?"
 "I would, indeed."
 "All right; I will bring his fighting nibs in and let you have a talk with him," said Bob, going from the room.
 The "boys" in the meantime were drinking and making merry at Bob's expense.
 But Bob was not one of those fellows who get left as a general thing.
 He brought Muldoon into the room where the bad, bad men were congregated, and sat him upon a table.
 The result was that a big laugh was raised, and everybody was punching his friend in the ribs, and asking if it was not a big racket on the boys.
 Oh, yes, it was.
 Bob brought Muldoon into the room and stood him upon the table.
 The gang gathered around him.
 "What is it?" they asked, and they appealed to Bob Rollick.
 "Gentlemen, this is a friend of mine, Mr. Muldoon," said he, introducing him to the party.
 They approached and looked at him.
 "Gentlemen, I'm wid yees," said he, or at least they thought he said so.
 Sullivan postured and looked at Muldoon, and so did the majority of those present.
 "What is it?" was the general inquiry.
 "My little friend, Muldoon. He failed to knock Mr. Sullivan out, but he is a good one all the same," said Bob.
 "So he is."
 "Indeed he is!"
 "He's a tough."
 "You bet."
 "The son of a rough."
 "You bet!"
 "And what do you call him?"
 "Muldoon."
 Then they all laughed, and partook of some more of Bob's refreshments.
 "Bring him forward," suggested one.
 "Cert; let's see what ther racket is."
 "An' he's a monk!"
 "Wait; we may see something yet."
 "Bring him out," said Sullivan, who now felt that he could posture on his laurels.
 "All right, gentlemen, I will favor you and ask what Mr. Muldoon has to say," said Bob, striking an attitude, with Muldoon before him on the table.
 "What will you give us?" asked one.
 "We will see what Muldoon has to say."
 "About what?"
 "The racket. I say, Muldoon, what do you think of Mr. Sullivan," asked Bob.
 "I think he's a duffer."
 "What?"
 "He's no good."
 "But he has a reputation for a fighter."
 "He's no good!"
 "Hush up! What do you know about it?" asked Bob, looking severely at the innocent monkey.
 "He's a duffer!"
 "Shut up, sir! How do you know whether he is a duffer or not? You are too fresh."
 "He can't fight."
 "How do you know?"
 "Didn't Mike Casey knock him out?"
 This was a quiet snap that Bob had lately picked up. But it downed Sullivan, and he felt very much like weakening.
 "Now, square man, how is it?" he asked, in a most earnest way, turning to Bob.
 "How is what?"
 "This racket."
 "Which one?"
 "No, no! Come off! Is it your racket?"
 "No, it must be Muldoon's," said Bob.
 "An' can he tork?"
 "I told you so before."
 "A torkin' monkey!"
 "Say, young fellow, how much do you want for that monk?"
 "He isn't for sale."
 "What's yer racket?"
 "Nothing, only he's more than an ordinary monk, and he catches on," said Bob.
 "Well, I should say! When did yer graft ter this curiosity?"
 "Good while ago."
 "An' he can tork?"
 "A few."
 "Well, I should say so! What do yer say?" he asked, going closer to him, and putting his face close up to Muldoon's.
 "Yer breath stinks!" and they all laughed.
 "What!" exclaimed the prize-fighter, starting back and being indignant.
 "Yer've been atin' on tons in whisky."
 "Confound your little make-up, what do yer mean?" demanded Sullivan.
 "Don't get up on yer ear."
 "Well, Mr. What-is-it, you take the rag clean off the bush!"
 "The rag you fight under?"
 "Oh, shut up! I say, young feller, I won't have any hard feelings, but how's the thing done?" asked Sullivan.
 "What thing?" Bob inquired.
 "Why, this monkey seemin' ter tork."

"Seeming! Didn't you hear him talk?" one of his friends demanded.
 "Oh, that be hanged! What do you lift me up for, soy?"
 "All right if you won't have it."
 "Well, I won't. But I soy, what'll yer take for the monk, anyhow? I'm goin' ter open a gin-palace, bime-by, an' I'd like ter get a torkin' monk as a sorter curiosity, yer know."
 "Muldoon is not for sale, Mr. Sullivan; I have had him a good while, and have become considerably attached to his nibs—eh, Mul?" he added, turning to the monkey.
 "Yes, an' I to you."
 "Naturally enough."
 "Because yer feeds me high."
 "Well, say, young feller, can I bring a party of friends her to-morrow night?"
 "Certainly," replied Bob.
 "What time?"
 "Suit yourself."
 "Well, call it nine o'clock."
 "Very well."
 "An' will yer put him through again?"
 "Oh, certainly! Anything to oblige."
 "All right. I'll pass round der hat for yer 'mong der boys, an' that means slug. See?"
 "Oh, you are very kind!"
 "An' we'll have a little feed after the show is over," he added, winking to Bob.
 "Anything to oblige you."
 This being agreed to, the party shook hands and left the place.
 Bob was alone, and, as usual, there was a grin upon his handsome mug.
 "He asked me if he could bring a few friends here to-morrow night, and I told him yes. Why should I not? At all events it is not my hotel, and if the proprietor can stand it, I guess I can, especially since I shall not be here."
 No. Bob's samples had come, and he was all ready to start out on the road again.
 Indeed, he had been loading altogether too long, and now he knew that it was either root hog or die.
 But he could not deny but that he had had a splendid time during this week's loading spell, although that he almost always had.
 From St. Louis he made up his mind to go to Cairo, and see what fortune had in store for him there.
 And Sullivan and his friends, when they gathered there that evening to see the wonderful talking monkey, or what-is-it? To say the least they were disappointed.
 But the boss prize-fighter was mad. In fact, he wanted to hurt somebody, for he would have it that the whole thing was a put-up job to make a fool of him.
 He had to bear it, however, and bitter as the pill was he had to down it, for the festive Bob Rollick was at that moment several miles away.
 But let us leave the slugger and his pals, and follow our friend, genial Bob, to Cairo and await events.

CHAPTER XXV.

FROM St. Louis Bob took the boat for New Orleans, after thinking of several other places to set out for, and there he was, on board the *Hannibal*, bound down the long stretch of river for the Crescent City.
 We have seen something of life on a Mississippi steamer, but only a portion of what it really is.
 People living or traveling East know but little of the characters to be met with on this long highway from one end of a vast continent to another. Tragedy, comedy and melodrama are to be encountered at every turn, and there is never any knowing which one will come to the front first.
 From St. Louis to New Orleans is fully one thousand miles, and the time occupied in making the trip varies from three to seven days, depending much upon the speed of the boat and the number of landings made.
 Bob had a state-room, of course, for himself and Muldoon, and after quietly settling himself for the trip, with everything made lovely, he went out upon the deck and began to take in what there was to be seen.
 There were about four hundred passengers on board the *Hannibal*, and even then her fine capacity was not half tested.
 And, as a natural consequence, there were all kinds in that list of passengers.
 There were the aristocratic planters and old Southern toughs, gamblers and confidence men, together with a quantity of half-breeds, composed of poor or half poor whites; and from this class down to the poorest darkey and his family.
 Quite a number of these darkeys were on their way down to Louisiana, where they were going to take up some cotton and sugar-cane lands.
 These were especially happy, for it does not take much to make a darkey in love with himself and the world at large. They had their mules and other live stock with them—in fact, all they had in the world—and the prospect for them was so glorious that they could scarcely contain themselves.
 Bob found the most amusement among this class, although there were others who, in spite of themselves, were quite as comical, especially what are called the "poor white trash" in the South.
 The "coons," as they are called down there, were gathered on the forward deck, and a motley gang they were, but a happy one.
 They were singing songs which no other people in the world can sing, and some of the bucks were dancing upon the deck in that happy, joyous way which is inimitable.

"Oh, de ole man go, de young man go;
 Putty yaller gal wid de mudders go;
 Half-grown gals and piccaninnies,
 Boun' fo' Louisiana, oh!"

Chorus. We took 'long de mule
 An' de ole corn-cracker,
 Wid plenty ob bacon
 An' plug terbacker,
 Whoop 'long, come 'long,
 Sing Susanna,
 For we am boun'
 Ter Louisiana."

This they sang over and over again, and at the end of the chorus half a dozen of them would dance a break down that would have made a town-pump laugh, so grotesque was it.
 Bob was taking it in, of course, for to him it was better than a minstrel show; and the fellow who was playing the banjo was not exactly a slouch, although he could not be rated as an artist of the first water.
 He encouraged them all he knew how, and when the interest began to flag, he went and bought a bottle of whisky to warm them up.
 "By golly, chile, you is a good un!" they all cried, after he had treated them.
 "Dat am so, honey," others replied, and Bob at once became popular.
 "Let me feel of that banjo, please. I used to be able to make 'em feel good," said Bob, reaching for it.
 "Sartin shuah, chile," replied the player, handing it to him.
 Now, Bob was not a great player on the instrument, but he had a snappy way with him that made a banjo sound very nicely; and he had made himself so solid with the simple darkeys that they were ready to believe that anything he did was superior to what almost any other fellow in the world could do.
 Perfecting the tuning of the instrument, he commenced to play a lively jig, and in less than no time those coons were up on their feet and dancing like mad.
 Even the wenches chipped in, and the little piccaninnies, until nearly every one of the party of immigrants were dancing or singing in almost perfect time to the tune.
 Bob Rollick was in his element, for by this time a large number of passengers had gathered around to hear the music and see the dancing.
 "Go it, mudder!" cried one of the coons, to a fat old wench who was doing her best to dance a break-down as lively as any of them. "Jus' show 'em what de ole gal can do!"
 "Sartin shuah, honey. De ole gal neber war left yet, don' yer know?" she cried.
 "Dat am so. Go in, Sally Ann! go in, de sweetness ob my buzzum!" cried the fellow, addressing a fine-looking molasses-colored girl on whom he was evidently mashed pretty badly.
 "See me, Sam!" she cried, doing her best, and putting down some elegant steps, steps which many a girl on the variety stage would have been glad to catch on to.
 "Oh, honey! dey don't make 'em any better! Dey don't know how ter do it!" cried her lover, patting with his hands to give the time for her dancing.
 And various other exclamations of happiness and delight were let off by the party, and they continued their dancing, greatly to the delight of Bob Rollick and those standing around.
 Then they sang various songs, while cutting up various shins as accompaniments, and in a short time the whole company were never happier in all their lives, such fun it was.
 Indeed, by this time the passengers from all divisions of the boat were crowding around, and taking the thing in as they would a minstrel show, Bob all the while playing like a major on the banjo, which delighted them beyond measure.
 "Oh, chile, you am so scrumptious! Jus' strike dat string once mo'!" cried an old fat wench, who appeared to be wholly carried away with the music and the situation.
 "Chime dem charmin' bells once mo'!" whooped another, and so the scene went on.
 "What am dem shoes dat you do wear?
 Dey am fo' ter climb dem golden stair;
 What am de debil a grumblin' about?
 He am anchored in hades an' can't get out.
 Oh, sisters, won't yer help me,
 Won't yer help me in de survise ob de Lord?"
 And then they all chipped in on the chorus:
 "I'm rolling, I'm rolling,
 I'm rolling through an unfrendli world;
 I'm rolling, I'm rolling
 Through an unfrendli world!"
 And Bob worked it so as to call out all the best things there were in the party, and the spectators made the most of it, applauding, as well they might, for it was a red-hot show.
 Finally the patriarch of the company of immigrants, a white-haired old coon, who had taken it upon himself to steer the company through the rapids of temptation and land them all unharmed on the Louisiana shore, and who was an occasional preacher, rose to his feet.
 The immigrants evidently respected him very much, for the moment they saw his venerable form erecting itself they became quiet and obedient, seemingly forgetting their former hilarity.
 "Brudderin an' sisterin, we am like unto de chillun ob Israel fleein' from de bad Phario ob Egypt, an' I am you' Moses!" said he.
 "Oh, great war Moses," intoned the company of blacks, who by this time had squatted all around upon

the deck, forgetting Bob and the high old jubilee that he had been giving them.

"You am de chillun ob Israel gwine down to de promise' lan' ob Louisiana."

"Great am Louisiana,
Flowin' wid milk an' honey,
Lead us dar, oh, bressed Moses!"

And then they broke into a sort of chant, which ran something like this:

"Moses, go ring dem bells,
Moses, go ring dem bells,
Moses, go ring dem bells,
Way down in Louisiana!"

after which they all commenced to dance again.

Well, it was a sight worth seeing, for Bob had contrived, in his own comical way, to get the darkeys fully aroused, and they were going in for all they were worth.

There was one old fellow who was especially lively on his big feet, and loud with his big mouth.

They called him Dink Brown, but for shouting and dancing and getting the other coons warmed up, he was the boss.

Bob took a great fancy to his charcoal nibs, and encouraged his antics in every way he could.

"Oh, I likes you un; you'se a chile ob mine, you is! Ya, ya, ya!" exclaimed Dink, after Bob had finished telling a comic story for them.

"Go 'way dar, Dink, you ole black nig. De ljea ob you babin' a chile like dat!" replied another of the company, and then there was another laugh.

"Go 'way dar, yerself! I'se whiter dan you am, fo' I'se got white ha'r," replied Dink.

"Ha'r I Call dat ha'r?"

"What am it den?"

"Wool. Nuffin but nigger wool!" was the reply, and this, of course, produced another loud yaw-haw, for it doesn't take much to make those people laugh very immoderately.

Then Bob changed the programme by doing some sleight-of-hand tricks for them, and this not only amused but frightened them not a little, for whatever an ignorant man cannot understand he at once attributes to heaven or the devil.

"Oh, by golly, de debil am 'sisin' him fo' shuah!" they whispered one to another.

"Fo' de Lord, dat am 'markable!"

"Dressful strange!" and various other comments were made upon Bob's little games of amusement.

Of course the white passengers, and the better educated of all grades, saw that it was only a sleight-of-hand performance, things that almost any clever man could do, but the darkeys would have it that the young fellow they had prized so highly was certainly in league with the evil one.

"How yer 'count for dat must'rious dis'pearance ob dat card?" asked one.

"Maybe dar am 'lectricity mixed wid it somehow."

"No, sah! 'lectricity don' do nuffin but run telegraphs an' thunder storms. S'pose dat 'lectricity gwine ter fool 'round wid cards? Guess not; I tole yer dar am somefin 'sterious 'bout dat business."

So it was finally settled that Bob was in league with the devil, and a feeling of dread came over the company of coons, lately so happy.

Even Dink Brown looked wild, and one old wench proposed that they hold a prayer meeting for the purpose of downing the devil, who had somehow got on board the steamboat, and into their favorite, Bob Rollick.

But Bob enjoyed the racket ever so much, for he saw that the other passengers understood it, and were also enjoying it.

"Chile, I war comestonish at yer," said old Dink, looking very serious.

"What's the matter with yer, Dink?" asked Bob, looking at him innocently.

"I don' know, chile, but how 'bout dem cards?" asked Dink.

"Oh, they're all right."

"But whar dat card go to?"

"Yah, tole us dat," said another.

"Why, it is the simplest thing in the world. Let me explain to you," said Bob, taking up the pack of cards. "Any one can make a pack of cards do just what they wish, if they only know how."

Then, to the amazement of the darkeys, he proceeded to shuffle the cards in a most dexterous manner.

"Brudder Dink," said he, "will have the extreme politeness to think of any particular card in the pack."

With some reluctance Dink admitted that he had fastened his mind upon a certain card, which he subsequently informed his friends, in a whisper, was the queen of diamonds.

Bob took the pack, faces towards him, and began to run them over, and at the same time to look as though he was greatly perplexed about something.

"I say, this is not a full pack of cards. There appears to be one card missing, the queen of diamonds."

At this Dink started, and almost turned pale.

"By the way, Dink, what was the card you thought of just now?" he added, looking at the old coon.

"Dat war—war de queen ob diamonds."

"The queen of diamonds! Why, that is the very card that is missing from the pack. Are you sure that you did not hide it about your person?" asked Bob.

"My pusson! I's got no pusson! I'se only a common nig," replied Dink, attempting to smile.

"What I mean is—haven't you got it somewhere about your clothes?"

"Ob cose not."

"Be good enough to look, Dink, please."

"Wha' I look fo'?"

"For that queen of diamonds that you thought of just now."

"Wha' thinkin' got ter do wid habin'?"

"Look and see, please. The queen of diamonds is missing from the pack, and because you thought of the very same card, perhaps it stuck to you somehow."

At this the darkeys all looked wild and wonderingly at Bob.

However, after being urged to go through himself once more, Dink began to search through his pockets, but without result.

"Open your vest," said Bob.

"Taint no usens," muttered Dink.

"Try it and see. That queen of diamonds is missing. It was here in the pack just before you proceeded to think of a certain card, and now, curiously enough, the very card is missing. Go on and search yourself."

Reluctantly Dink unbuttoned his vest, and out dropped the queen of diamonds.

The old fellow was half frightened out of his wits, and leaped to his feet.

Indeed, this brought them all up, for at this simple trick they became more and more convinced that Bob was in league with the chief of darkness.

"Oh, chile! oh, chile! I'se 'fraid you'se bad," cried old Dink, getting away from that card.

"Bad! You just said I was good," said Bob, while the white company standing around laughed, and thoroughly appreciated the sleight-of-hand performance that had so astonished the poor darkeys.

"Oh, that is your little racket, is it, old man?" asked Bob, laughing at Dink.

"Don' know nuffin 'bout it, noways. Keerds am de debil's primer-book, fo' shuah. I hearn tell 'bout it afo', but now I biebes it," said he, with genuine horror.

"But you had the missing card?"

"Don' know nuffin 'bout it."

"Oh, you are a sly old dog, Dink," said Bob, laughing heartily.

"I toles yer dat I don' know nuffin 'bout it," protested Dink, while the other darkeys began to get panicky, and to huddle closer together, all the while casting their big white eyes at Bob, suspiciously.

"What's the matter with you, chilluns?" asked Bob, winking to those standing around.

"Dar am somefin wrong hea," said an old wench, shaking her head sadly.

"Where is it, aunty?—oh, under that chain-box, eh?" said Bob, going toward the box in which the anchor-chain was stored, on the fore-castle deck.

The darkeys looked wonderingly at him, and slowly followed out of curiosity.

Approaching to the chain-box, he knelt down beside it with his ear near the edge.

Waiting until the wondering darkeys had nearly all gathered around, he began to work his ventriloquial racket on them.

"You said there was something wrong here, didn't you, Dink?"

"Dar am somefin wrong, somewhar, dat am sartin. I don' un'erstan' it," replied old Dink, shaking his head.

"Well, it must be in this box, then. I say, is there anything wrong in this box?" he asked, rapping on it with his knuckles.

"Yes; lemme out!" seemed to come from the interior of that chain-box.

The darkeys all started back in surprise.

"Who are you?"

"Pse Jed Blinkers."

"Jed Blinkers? Does anybody know Jed Blinkers?" asked Bob, turning to the astonished darkeys.

To tell the truth, Bob knew that there was such a darky on board, and he also knew at that moment he was asleep in the hold, having been treated just about enough to retreat into some quiet retreat and stay there until he felt more like a reputable human being.

"Jed Blinkers! Why, ob course we know him!" shouted half a dozen of the crowd.

"But how came he locked into this box?"

"De Lord only knows. Ax him."

"Who?"

"Jed."

"Oh! I say, Jed, how came you in this box?" asked Bob.

"Dink frowd me in heah!" came the smothered reply, and then there was instantly great excitement among the coons.

"Luff him out!"

"Shame!" and other cries were heard on every side, while old Dink was exceedingly loud and indignant with his denials.

"I nebber done nuffin ob de kine. S'pose he's drunk an' go in dar ter sleep it off."

"Lemme out!"

"Stan' back dar, all ob yer! What's de matter heah, anyhow?" demanded one of the colored deck hands, seeing the excitement and a good chance to show his authority.

"Dar am a man in dat yer chain-box," exclaimed one excited old aunty, "an' if yer don' took him out, he smover, maybe."

"Go way dar! Man in dat chain-box! What's de matter wid you nigs, anyhow?" the deck-hand asked, contemptuously.

"Yes, yes! Jed Blinker am in dar."

"Pshaw! S'pose I'se a fool nig like you?"

"Sartin fo' shuah; we all heah him jus' now," protested several.

"Heah Jed Blinker in dat chain-box?"

"Shuah."

"Go 'way, fool nigger. Dar am't room 'nough in dat box ter put a hoppy toad; it am chuck full ob anchor-chain. You uns mus' be crazy as coots."

"Jus' open it an' see."

"No, I won't; yer can't make no fool ob me."

"Wal, just heah him for youself den. I say, Jed, am't you in dar?" he called, and Bob, who was keenly

on the watch, at once replied for the supposed prisoner:

"Yes; lemme out or I'll smover!"

"Dar! Now what you think?" cried several.

"Guess we am't much fool nigs, be we?"

The deck-hand looked puzzled, and for an instant he was irresolute.

"Open dat box," yelled several, and amid much excitement three of them unhooked and lifted off the heavy cover.

It was even full of chain, and of course contained no Jed Blinkers.

Every coon in that astonished crowd uttered exclamations of surprise, and held up their hands.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SUCH a frightened crowd of darkeys as that was on board the Mississippi steamboat *Hannibal* would be hard to find anywhere.

Bob Rollick, who had been having all sorts of fun with them during the first day's trip on the way to New Orleans, had convinced them finally that a darkey named Jed Blinkers was sent into the chain-box; but after working the excitement up to the boiling point over the supposed outrage which old Dink had played, they lifted the heavy box cover, and found it full of chain, but no Jed.

"Fo' de Lord!"

"Bress de lamb!" and almost fifty other exclamations were let off in rapid succession, while many shook their heads and glanced from the box to Bob, who seemed as much astonished and interested as any of them.

As for the white passengers who had been standing around to watch the fun, they could not exactly make it out, although they felt certain that Bob had played some trick upon the darkeys on the fore-castle deck.

And the comments which the coons made upon the business were enough to make a hat rack, so comical were they.

"Didn't I tole yer dat I neber put dat drunken Jed Blinkers in dat box?" asked old Dink, turning to the others.

"Dar am some myst'ry heah, chile, I's shuah of it," said an old aunty, who was shaking her head in a very thoughtful way. "I can't comersian' it, noways."

"What's the matter, aunty?" asked Bob, who up to this time had said but little.

"De debil am at work heah somewhar, fo' shuah," said she, shaking her head.

"What makes you think so, aunty?"

"How 'bout dem keerds?" she asked, referring to Bob's sleight-of-hand tricks with a pack of cards. "How 'bout dis yer?" she added, pointing to the open chain-box, around which a dozen wondering darkeys stood.

"I don't understand you, aunty."

"Wal, now, hole on dar, chile. How was it all, anyhow?" asked old Dink, now coming to the front.

"How was what?" asked Bob.

"How 'bout Jed in de box?"

"I give it up, Dink," replied Bob.

"Dar am some blackness har."

"What do you mean?"

"Dar am some black art."

"Yah, we's all been hoodooed!" cried the fat and indignant old aunty.

"I guess you uns be all off your nut," suggested the deck hand, who had been fooled quite as bad as any of them, and for fear any perplexing questions might be asked him, he slammed down the cover of the chest containing the anchor chain, and then turned away to other business.

To tell the truth, these coons were all paralyzed. What to make of the whole business they did not know. All they could swear to was that they had heard the voice which seemed to come from the interior of the box, and evidently belonging to a human being, whom they regarded as Jed Blinkers, a groggy coon whom they all knew.

"Dar am somefin most 'markable 'bout dat yer," mused old Dink Brown, as he scratched his woolly head and looked wild.

"Mus' be der debil am on bode dis yer boat," suggested another of the puzzled darkeys.

"Oh, I guess not," said Bob, but it was evident that they had begun to suspect that he was not exactly what he ought to be, and that there was something crooked about him.

Some of those who had been watching the fun came to the right conclusion, namely, that Bob was a clever ventriloquist, and the laugh that they let go was a good one.

At all events, he was regarded as a sort of a hero by the white passengers, while the colored ones were much in doubt about him since he had shown them the card tricks, although they did not connect him with the box delusion at all, unless it was really what some of them suspected, that he was in league with the devil.

"Well, I'll see you to-morrow," said he, as he walked towards his state-room.

He felt a trifle anxious by this time regarding *Muldoon*, whom he had not seen since morning, and being locked up in his cage, he knew he must be hungry.

So he left the band of darkeys with whom he had had so much fun, and as night was coming on, they also had to spar around for something to eat, although it did not take them long to get out their cold bacon and hoe-cakes, or to get outside of them either.

But while this wrestling was going on, they indulged in all sorts of speculations regarding Bob, some of which were comical enough to make a hen show her teeth. Some of them contended that he was all right, and others that he was all wrong.

That evening he was the observed of all observers when he went down into the dining-cabin, for many had witnessed the fun he made, and nearly all had been talking about him.

But Bob could look as innocent as a month-old kitten when he wanted to, and this happened to be one of the times when he wanted to, and the result was that nobody took him for the fourth cousin of a joker, much less a ventriloquist.

His lookers were open all the while, just the same, and at the table he saw several queer characters whom he spotted for future sport.

After supper he went out on the after deck to enjoy a smoke in the twilight, and to take in some of the lowland monotony which characterizes the scene on either shore from St. Louis to New Orleans.

pected that he was being addressed, and so, even if he heard the question, took no notice of it.

This enraged the bombastic politician, and so he strode over to where the quiet man sat.

"You just now addressed me, sir," said he, placing his hand somewhat rudely upon his shoulder.

The man turned and looked up at him.

"Eh—what's that?"

"You were pleased to make some insulting remarks about me just now, sir," said he, severely.

"Who the deuce are you?" asked the stranger, thoroughly astonished.

"Oh, sir, I heard your blackguard remarks, and I demand an apology."

"The deuce you do!"

"Yes, sir—instantly, sir."

deck, and he was by this time evidently glad to get out of sight.

A loud laugh followed him, and no one went into it more heartily than did Bob Rollick and the quiet stranger who had so completely knocked out that fiery youth who wanted a row.

Of course Bob was to blame for the whole business, but the stranger did not know it.

And though he laughed over the matter, he was mad yet, and while he chuckled over the discomfiture of the fellow who had assaulted him, yet he could hardly contain himself and was ready to fight almost anybody else, under the impression that the fellow might have a friend or confederate somewhere on board.

But of course he and Bob became good friends, as



"Go it, mudder!" cried one of the coons, to a fat old wench who was doing her best to dance a break-down as lively as any of them. "Jus' show 'em what de ole gal can do!" "Sartin shuah, honey. De ole gal neber war left yet, don' yer know?" she cried.

The darkeys were all at the other end of the boat, and of course, if he wanted any further fun, he would have to pick it up where he could find it.

He was sitting quietly on a chair looking astern at the wake of the steamer, when a tall young Southern gentleman approached him, and took a seat in the next chair.

"Good-evening," said the stranger, to which kindly salutation Bob replied pleasantly. "The captain tells me that you are a Northerner."

"No, I'm a New Yorker," quietly replied Bob, knocking the ashes from his cigar.

"Well, sir, by gad, sir, what do you call a New Yorker but a Northerner, I'd like to know? But, of course, you people up that way don't know any too much, and possibly you did not know that fact. Who are you, and what about you, may I ask?"

"Certainly; I'm Bob Rollick, the Yankee notions drummer. Can I sell you a bill of goods?" asked Bob, still as quiet as a sucking lamb.

"No, sir—I am not a tradesman, sir."

"Oh, probably you are a millionaire."

"No, sir, not exactly, sir. I am a politician, and a member of the Louisiana Legislature."

"He's a snide, and you'd better look out for your valuables," seemed to come from a man sitting back to them, with his feet on the guard.

That fiery Southern politician, who evidently wanted to pick a quarrel with Bob simply because he was more popular on board than he was, suddenly concluded that he had another opportunity offered to distinguish himself.

Turning haughtily towards the man, who was quietly smoking and enjoying himself, he asked:

"Did you speak, sir?"

But the man was minding his own business, and not being acquainted with anybody on board, never sus-

"What's the matter with you—drunk?"

"You're a scoundrel, sir!" replied that fiery Southern youth, at the same time slapping the stranger's face.

That stranger was a stranger to that sort of treatment. He evidently objected to it, for he got promptly up and knocked his assailant down.

The mussy Southerner seemed a trifle dazed as he picked himself slowly up from among the chairs, but for fear he wasn't dazed enough, he knocked him down again and sat upon him.

"Say, what's the matter with you anyway? Didn't your supper set good?" he calmly asked.

"Let me up, you low-born villain!" cried the victim of Bob's ventriloquism.

"Well, I guess not. What did you hit me for?"

"You insulted me."

"You lie; I never saw you before."

"You did, you—"

"Take it back or I'll polish you off!"

"Let me up, and we will see whether you will or not."

"Not much. You are either drunk or crazy, and I think I can whollop either one out of you in about three flaps of a sheep's tail," and just to show him whether he could or not he patted him on the nose.

"Murder! help!" he cried, and several of the passengers and an officer of the boat rushed up and demanded to know what the matter was.

The stranger explained, and called upon Bob to witness that what he had said was true, and of course Bob confirmed it.

"You get out of this!" cried the officer, seizing the Southerner, whose nose was bleeding badly. "You have had two or three musses since we started, and if you try it again we'll put you ashore at the next landing-place. Not a word! Get out and go to your stateroom," he added, hustling him off from the forward

the expression goes, and they sat there talking for a long time, although of course our hero never gave the business away.

"I'm a Chicago rooster, I am, and I don't like that sort of familiarity," he growled.

"Chicago is a great place to hail from," said Bob.

"Yes; don't let that get rubbed off your memorandum-book. You whoop from there?"

"No. New York," replied Bob.

"Oh. Well, that's almost as good as Chicago. What's your racket?"

"Drummer."

"Drummer! Why, that's my racket. How?"

"Yankee Notions."

"Good! I'm on hardware."

"Shake!"

They shook and became even better friends than at first, now that they found they belonged to the same profession.

"Jack, Screw & Co."

"Slope, Slimmer & Co."

"Good enough! Flesh again."

Again they shook hands.

"Bound where?" asked the Chicago drummer.

"New Orleans."

"Good rack! Me too."

"Shake again."

They shook heartily, for now they found they were not only both of them drummers, but both bound for the same destination.

"Front and back?" (meaning his full name).

"Bob Rollick."

"Good! Jim Duso, mine."

"Once more!" and again they shook hands.

Several people who stood around could not help laughing at the laconic affair and the half pantomimic way in which it was carried out.

But they paid no attention to what others said or

did. Cigars were exchanged and indulged in, also a long and pleasant chat, both about business in general and a comparing of notes regarding places they had visited.

It was nearly nine o'clock in the evening before they had finished, and each finding the other a good fellow, they became friends in right good earnest.

Bob finally explained the whole racket of the affair with the hot-headed Southern politician, and how he had started the business by a little ventriloquism; after which he took him to his state-room and introduced him to *Muldoon*, at the same time giving him some samples of his art, which greatly astonished his brother drummer.

"Now I understand that racket you had with the pigs this afternoon," said Joe Duso.

other expressions of delight were heard as Bob came among them.

He greeted them in his own cheery, inimitable manner, and they soon forgot all the prejudice they had against him on account of the mysterious doings of the day before.

"Well, folks, how am you feelin' dis yer mornin'?" he asked, imitating their style.

"Very fine, honey; how am you?"

"Never better in my life. I suppose you are glad because you are getting so near your destination?" he added.

"How dat, honey?" asked old Dink Brown, not understanding the meaning of the word any more than the others did.

"Oh, bress de Lord!"

"Oh, honey!" were the cries which followed the general laughter of the colored folks.

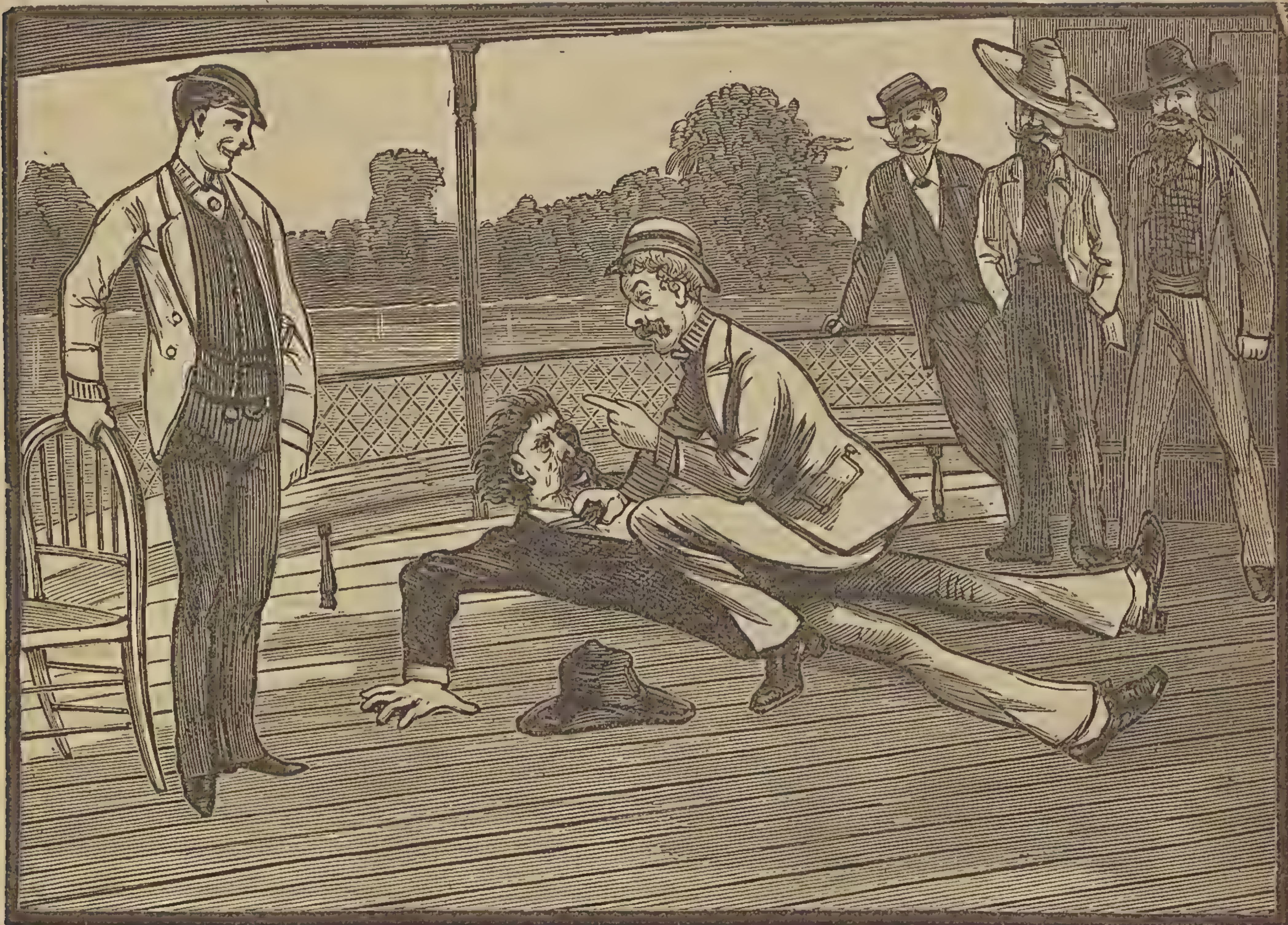
"An' don' be done gone look jus' like a black man?" exclaimed one of the women.

"Go 'way, dar! Brack man hain' got no tail like dat, hab he?" demanded old Dink.

"I din' done tole you to look at he tail, but at he head—yah, yah, yah!"

Indeed, the resemblance between *Muldoon's* head and Dink's was strong enough to set people laughing all around.

"A nigger's a nigger, an' a monkey's a monkey; dat's all de difference dar am," said another darkey, somewhat indignantly; but even this explanation didn't make matters better.



For fear he wasn't dazed enough, he knocked him down again and sat upon him. "Say, what's the matter with you anyway? Didn't your supper set good?" he calmly asked.

"Of course you do."

"And it was a good one, 'pon my word," replied Duso, laughing.

"And to-morrow I'll work a bigger snap than that," replied Bob.

"How?"

"With his nibs here, *Muldoon*."

"Oh, I see."

"I'll take him forward and amuse the coons for a while, then I'll paralyze them by letting him appear to talk, as I have just now. Come forward and see me."

"Put it in your order book that I will."

"Good enough. By the way, I think there is an abode of moisture down on the lower deck."

"Seems to me I have heard of it."

"Let us explore."

They explored, but when they found it, they also found that bad, bad Southerner trying to fire himself up for another muss. But the experience he had had with Joe Duso was quite enough for him, evidently, for he dusted out of that arsenal of moisture without a word, but not until he had exhibited a pair of most beautiful black eyes that Joe had given him, together with a decidedly enlarged nose.

Of course they gave him the grand laugh, but he didn't stop to resent it or make any comments.

Well, the next morning Bob went forward to see the company of darkeys with whom he had had so much fun the day before. They had eaten their breakfast and were feeling first-rate, to all appearances, and were glad to see him.

By this time the boat had reached within twenty-five or thirty miles of Vicksburg, Miss. The morning was bright and beautiful, although rather too warm for the comfort of anybody but a negro. It seldom gets too warm for them.

"High mornin' ter you, chile!"

"Bress de Lord, he's come some mo'!" and various

"Why, you will reach the place you are going to before night, won't you?"

"Yah, de Lord willin', an' de boat don' go run later a snag," suggested an old aunty.

"Is yer gwine ter make us some mo' fun ter-day, honey?" asked Dink.

"Well, I don't know. What shall we do?"

"Oh, jus' touch dat ole banjo some mo'."

And he laughed and capered around the deck as lively as a kitten.

"I'll tell you what I'll do; I've got a pet monkey that can do lots of tricks, and I'll bring him forward here and let you see him."

"Oh, honey, you is so nice!"

"Fetch along dat monkey."

"Oh, bring us dat lubly monkey!"

And a dozen other expressions were at once heard by that interested group of darkeys.

"Oh, bring de monk."

"All right. I'll be back here presently," said Bob, going aft in the direction of his state-room, leaving as delighted a company of darkeys as were ever seen anywhere.

Many of them had never seen a monkey, although they had all heard tell of them; and, of course, curiosity was fully aroused to get a look at anything of the kind.

Bob first found his new friend, Joe Duso; and then, taking *Muldoon*, they went forward again to where the expectant darkeys were standing.

Placing him on top of the capstan, where all could see him, he stood aside, and gave them a chance to inspect the curiosity. Nor were they alone the curious ones, for the white passengers also crowded around.

"Colored folks, this is my friend *Muldoon*," said Bob, introducing him; and, to make the thing more comical, the monkey pulled off his hat and bowed right and left.

"Make him cut up didoes, honey," said a colored woman, and the proposition was agreed to by every body.

So Bob put *Muldoon* through a course of sprouts for their amusement, such as playing a game of cards with him and allowing *Mul* to beat him, making him play on a little fiddle and dance to his own music; all of which astonished and delighted everybody, but more especially the admiring and enthusiastic darkeys.

"By golly, dat am a great monkey fo' shuah!" said old Dink.

"Guess he am almos' human," said another.

"Go 'way, fool nigger! He amn't nuffin but a beast jus' like a dog."

"Don' he kno' mo' den a dog?"

"No; he can't tork, can he?"

"Faith, I can talk as well as a nagur," the monkey seemed to say, with a strong Irish accent.

Great smokel! You should have seen those darkeys. They crowded away from around that monkey, uttering exclamations of astonishment and alarm.

"Fo' de Lord, it torks!"

"I hearn it wid my own eyes."

"Oh, it am de debil fo' shuah. Took him away— took him away!" cried several of the women.

"Oh, shut up, an' give us a rest!" exclaimed *Muldoon*, savagely, at which the frightened darkeys made a break and scattered in all directions, while even the majority of the white passengers were greatly puzzled.

Bob and Joe Duso shook hands.

"How was it?"

"Good enough!" replied Joe; "but let's get them back and have some more fun with them. Wait a shake, and I'll fix it," he added, starting towards the frightened darkeys.

CHAPTER XXVII.

JOE DUSO attempted to gather the frightened negroes back again, to witness what *Muldoon* might do, but it was a task, for after they had heard him talk, there was no doubt in their minds but that he was the devil surely.

Bob Rollick stood by the capstan on which *Muldoon* was seated. He was laughing in spite of himself, as were nearly all of the other white passengers standing around.

"No, no, he am de debel fo' shuah," said old Dink Brown, the spokesman of the colored passengers, and he seemed to mean it.

"Well, you are a very good man, arn't you?"

"Fo' de Lord, I tries to be," replied Dink.

"Well, then, what have you to fear if it really is the devil?"

"Boss, I don't like his style."

"Whose—the devil's?"

"I don't like nobody's style 'bout de boat. I am shuah dat he am de debel, an' I don't want nuffin fo' to do wid him," replied Dink, savagely.

"Nonsense; it is only a monkey."

"No, boss, monkeys don't talk," replied Dink, shaking his head.

"Oh, some kinds do. Come back and see the fun," replied Joe, coaxingly.

"We is done gone scared," said he, looking towards the other coons, who were huddling into a corner from sheer fright.

"Nonsense; come along. That is a wonderful monkey, Dink."

"Oh, my golly, yas, I fink so," said Dink, looking anxiously back, as did his fellows.

"Come back and see his didoes."

They evidently did not want to do it, but Joe finally persuaded them, and they came reluctantly back, and gathered around that awful creature.

"What's the matter with you?" asked Bob, as they gathered around.

"Wha' am de marter wid dat monk?" demanded one of the frightened coons.

"You have heard about Baalam's ass, haven't you?" asked Joe Duso.

"Cose. Toles all 'bout in de Scriptor, don't it?"

"Well, what did Baalam's ass do?"

"He 'bucked' and frowed him off," replied one of the darkeys, who appeared to know all about it.

"He wouldn't have it?"

"Pears not, 'cordin' ter Scriptor."

"Well, you may call that a miracle?"

"'Cordin' ter Scriptor, yes."

"And what is there wrong about this?"

"It amn't 'cordin' ter Scriptor," replied the coon, dwelling on and bearing down upon the point he had made.

"Oh, go and live with yourself. Miracles are nothing. Anybody can perform one of those things nowadays. Come up and see the monkey."

"But I tole you it am agin natur," the old darkey persisted.

"Never mind, come and see something of the kind. It will give you new ideas."

"Boss, I war born and brung up a Mefodist, an' I don't want no Baptist nonsense 'bout dis yer," howled old Dink.

"How could there be Baptist nonsense about a monkey?"

"Waal, dat am so," replied Dink, scratching his woolly head, and looking a trifle perplexed.

"Very well, then come along and see some fun."

"Boss, somehow it seems sacrilegious ter dis yer chile," said Dink, musingly.

"Nonsense! Come along."

Thus urged, the old man was influenced, and the others followed him back to the capstan, where Bob and *Muldoon* were still waiting for what might follow, and in the meantime a large number of passengers had gathered around, having heard that there was fun afloat.

"Say, what's the matter with you?" asked Bob, greeting the returning nigs.

"How 'bout dat monkey?" asked Dink, pointing to *Muldoon*.

"Why, what's the matter with him?" asked Bob.

"I—I don't 'zactly unnerstan' it, chile."

"For what reason? What has my little pet monkey done?"

"Waal, chile, dar am—I say, chile, do he tork?"

"Of course he does. He's human."

"Human! Human natur?"

"Certainly."

"By golly, it don't seem possuble."

"Oh, that's all right."

"Wha' am he, anyhow?"

"Oh, only a shriveled-up darkey."

"Wha' am dat you say?"

Bob bowed and looked sober.

"But how 'bout dat tail?"

"That's nothing. All darkeys, when they shrink up, have a tail like that."

"Great Moses!" he exclaimed, and then turned to inform his companions of the wonder, and they in turn got a trifle nervous over the announcement.

The idea of *Muldoon*'s being a dried or shriveled up darkey was too much for them, and yet it was nearer the line of possibility than that he was a simple monkey with the organs of speech, and so they gradually caught on, and gathered around again out of curiosity.

"By golly, wonder what did it?" asked one, as they crowded around.

"Mus' hab been warry hot wever whar he war libin'," suggested another.

"Maybe he drunk some alum water," said another, by way of explaining how the mystery came about.

"Dat am so. Alum water pucker him all up," replied the person spoken to.

"Wha' he drink alum water fo' when whisky am so cheap?"

"Dat shows de perversity ob de human coon," said Dink, reflectively.

"Dat am so. He would drink alum water when whisky war so cheap," replied one other of the astonished coons.

"An' it sarv him right," said another.

"Ob cose it do," and a dozen other expressions followed, while they continued to regard *Muldoon*.

"What's ther matter wid yees coons?" asked *Muldoon*, with a rank Irish brogue.

The negroes all started, and exchanged glances with each other.

"How 'bout dat?" asked one.

"What?" queried Bob.

"How dat darkey come ter be Irish?"

"Oh, the shrinking up changed him so that he talks that way in spite of himself."

"By golly, dat beats de bush!" exclaimed several of the astonished darkeys.

"What do you think of him?"

"Dat am de wuss case ob shrinkin' up nigger dat eber I seen. But whar ae got his tail?"

"Why, you fool nigger," said Dink, with a look of contempt, "pears like you don't know much as a free yeah ole picaninny."

"Wha' de matter wid you?"

"I'se s'prised at yer ignorance. Din yer know dat all niggers had tails once?"

"Shoo! go 'way, dar, ole man!" exclaimed several, amid roars of laughter.

"Dat am so, I tole yer. Good many yeahs ago nigs all hab tails jus' like dat, an' bimeby dey drop off jus' same as pollywogs," he added, and again they laughed.

"Laugh much's yer mine ter, but I tole yer dat 'bout a thousan' yeah ago all nigs had tails. Amn't dat so, honey?" he asked, turning to Bob.

"Oh, yes," replied Bob, trying to look sober.

"Ob cose it am. I heah my ole massa read about it in a book."

"Yes; he's right."

"Shoo!" they all exclaimed.

"Waal, now, chile, how 'bout white folks?" asked an old colored woman.

"Oh, they used to have them too before they got bleached out white," replied Joe Duso.

"Ob cose dey did," put in Dink. "Don't yer know dat de fust man war a monkey?"

"Shoo! go 'way dar, ole man; you'se gone clean off yer cabase!"

"Adam an' Eve monkeys?"

"Cose; an' it pears like you tns don't know much moah dan dey did. How dat yer big worm tork to Ebe if she wasn't a hanimal, an' tork de hanimal language?" he demanded.

This appeared to be a poser, and while the white spectators laughed at Dink's philosophy, the idea of which he had picked up by hearing somebody talk about the Darwin theory, the darkeys scratched their woolly heads and looked extremely bothered.

"Don't b'lieve nuffin ob de kine," said one of them finally.

"Cose yer don't: you is too ignorunt."

"Tork 'bout ignorance! You don't can't find it in de Bible, nowhars. Guess you bettah wait till you knows how to read yourself befo' you call udder folks ignorunt," sneered one old aunty, and the others appeared to agree with her.

"Wha' dat got fo' ter do wid dis yer shrunk up Irish nigger?" asked another.

"Jus' nuffin 'tail. Make him tork, chile."

"Make him tork! Neber seen such a lot ob ignorummuses in my life. S'pose he am a 'shene or somefin dat yer has ter wine up ter make it go? Don't 'splay you' bad breedin'," said Dink, contemptuously.

"Make him talk yourself," suggested Bob.

"How you do it, chile?"

"Why, ask him some question."

The curious darkey approached *Muldoon* timidly and finally asked:

"How—how you come so?"

"Say, what's der matter wid yer, anyhow?" the monkey appeared to ask, at which the darkey started back in evident alarm.

It will be borne in mind that *Muldoon* was dressed in a dress suit; a little "swallow-tail" coat and a diminutive plug hat. In fact, he was arrayed like a dandy, for Bob took considerable pains with his get-up, and had as many as five different dresses for him.

"I—I axed yer how you don't come so," replied the darkey, after some hesitation.

"Faith, I kin by stameboat like yerself," said *Muldoon*, and they all laughed.

"I don't mean dat; I—I mean how yer got shrunk up dis yer way?"

"A tin' alum."

"How you feel?"

"Fale av me an see."

The inquisitive darkey approached *Muldoon* for the purpose of feeling of him, but it will be remembered that his nigs did not allow any one to fool with or be familiar with him.

The consequence was that when he put out his hand to feel of *Muldoon*, that celebrated cuss reached for that darkey's hand.

He managed to catch on to a thumb, and

"Oh, oh, oh! wow, wow, wow!" he cried, as he danced around. "Make him lemme go!"

"Let up, *Mul*. I'm astonished at you. The idea of your going for smoked meat!" said Bob.

Muldoon knew nothing but obedience, and when Bob spoke to him he instantly released the howling darkey.

"Oh, my gosher!" he exclaimed, as he continued to dance around and hug his bitten thumb as though it

was the dearest thing he had in the world; "he's bitten my fum all orph! Oh, oh, oh!"

All the sympathy he got was a laugh from his friends, but at the same time they could not seem to understand why it was that a shrunken up man should bite and act so much like an animal.

"By golly, dat am quar," said one.

"I guess it am sore," suggested another, pointing to the urchin whose freshness had gotten him into all the trouble.

"Now, Bonus, atween you an I, dat am only a monkey in my estimation," said another.

"But monkeys am animals, and don't tork. How 'bout dat?" asked his friend.

"Atween you an I, Mr. Bonus, I think dar am some deviltruns gwine on yer. Dat am a werry nice young man ter look at, but dar am doubts," said he, tapping his black forehead, and looking mysterious.

"Bout what?"

"Does you know what de Scriptor say?"

"Don't know much 'bout de Scriptor, but what am it?"

"It say in one place dat de debel, he go roun' like a roarin' tiger, seekin' whom he may devour somebody, an' in anoder place, it say dat he appea' af' de chillun ob men in various pleasin' ways. Now, I don't pertain to say, but atween you an I, I hab my doubts."

"Bout what?"

"I—I don't like ter say it, but how'd we know but dat this yer nice lookin' chap am de debel in disguise, an' dat dat yer critter am one ob his imps?"

"Maybe dat am so," said the other, speaking in a whisper, and glancing carefully around.

"De debel am a great tempter, an' he may be tryin' ter get us inter some orful wicked scrape, so look sharp!" said he, with much hesitancy.

Little by little this idea got out among them, and they began to grow serious.

One old woman suggested that they ought to hold a prayer-meeting, and sing some pious hymns, in order to 'drive away the Prince of Darkness, which they now began to regard Bob as being.

So fully did this get hold of the darkeys that they began to grow boisterous.

Bob began to catch on to this snap, and so, taking *Muldoon* under his arm, he started to make his way back to his state-room.

But the darkeys, by this time, had become so roused and imbued with the belief that they had the devil to fight with, that they began to get around our friend Bob Rollick and Joe Duso, who stuck close to him.

"What's the matter with you?" demanded Bob, looking pleasantly at them.

"Don't spoke ter him or your soul am lost, fo' shuah!" cried one of the women.

"He am de debil in disguise!"

"He's come ter drag us all down ter perdition! Kill him!"

"Frow him overboard!"

"Chuck him in de water!" and various other angry expressions were made use of by the now highly excited darkeys, as they followed and crowded around him.

"Keep back, or down goes the steamer," said Bob, now understanding that they regarded him as the Evil One, and of course knowing that they would believe him capable of doing anything miraculous.

And this threat had its effect, for the moment he spoke they recoiled and stood huddled together in the most abject fear seemingly.

"Look out, dar! Look out, or we all go to de bottom!" cried several, and there was a momentary panic among them.

"You bet you will. Stand back!" cried Bob, waving his hand.

"Hold on!"

"Keep back dar! He am de debel, shuah!" and a hundred other exclamations were shot at him, as he worked his way back toward his state-room.

But amid the excitement Bob managed to retreat and reach his state-room in safety, taking *Muldoon* along with him, Joe Duso following as soon as he saw he was out of danger.

They had a good laugh as soon as they got under cover; but, in the meantime, the excitement am on the negroes increased until they became enraged to a rioting point, and talked hard of mobbing Bob, whom they believed to be the devil more and more.

"If we don't frow him oberbode, he shuah to run us on a snag," said one.

"What good dat do?" asked another.

"Why, drown him."

"Drown him? Yer can't drown de debel; he swim jus' like a duck. Hearn preachers say so heaps o' times," said another.

"Put him down 'mong de 'shinery an' smash him!"

"Yes, frow him down under de crank!" and dozens of other violent suggestions were made. Indeed, the coons were fast becoming dangerous, and the officers began to gather around them, for the purpose of driving them back to the fore-castle.

But in doing this they were obliged to use considerable force, so determined were they.

"De debel am abode dis yer boat, an' he mus' be frow'd oberbode," they cried.

"Shut up and go back to your places," said the captain, shaking a whip at them.

"Go flog de debel."

"What's the matter with you anyway? Shut up, and don't let me hear any more out of you, or I'll drop you at the next landing."

"Better drop that debel, cap'n," one of the old aunts ventured to suggest.

"Oh, nonsense! Can't you fools take a joke?" asked the first mate.

Meanwhile the white passengers had gathered

around in large numbers, and were taking the situation all in.

"How vos dot onyhow?" asked a big Dutchman, who could not comprehend the matter.

"Dose niggers vos goin' to gid up a mudiny," suggested a friend of his, who thought he knew all about it.

The officers, however, after they had got the darkeys in subjection, explained to the passengers that there was a youthful joker aboard who had succeeded in making those superstitious darkeys believe that he was the devil.

Meanwhile Bob Rollick and Joe Duso had changed their appearance to such an extent that their victims would not know them, and then returned to where the darkeys were huddled together, earnestly discussing the situation.

And by this time the more superstitious of them were singing hymns which they supposed would have the effect of driving the evil spirits from the boat, and some of those hymns were as good as comic songs.

And the way they sang them was even better and more comical than mistrels could have done them.

One of them, that especially attracted the attention of the listeners, ran as follows:

"Oh, de whale he got Jonah,
In good ole Bible times!
Jonah he got tucken in,
In de good ole Bible times!
De debil got inter Jonah,
In de good ole Bible times!
De whale gib him a corner,
In good ole Bible times! (Repeat.)

Jonah foun' he was took in,
In good ole Bible times!
He repent him ob his sin,
In good ole Bible times!
Jonah ask ter pass de cup,
In good ole Bible times!
Den de whale he frow'd him up,
In good ole Bible times! (Repeat.)

The above is a sample of the words, but no pen in the world could show the picture as these uncouth, superstitious darkeys presented it to those who were observing them.

They danced as much as they sang, swaying all together this way and that, as they went in heavy for the purpose of exorcising the devil whom they felt sure they had among them.

Wilder and louder they became every moment, and, as there was no knowing to what extent they would go if not checked, the captain of the steamer ordered a stream from the force-pump turned upon them, and then there was fun.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE dose from the force-pump hose had a dampening effect upon those darkeys, and they finally subsided, although each one of them should have been put through a clothes-wringer by rights.

It cooled them off, however, and after soaking awhile, they concluded to simmer down and let the "debber" have his way.

It will be remembered that Bob Bollick, by aid of Muldoon, his monkey, and his art of ventriloquism, had nearly paralyzed a company of colored immigrants who were bound from St. Louis to some point in Louisiana, where they proposed to colonize, by convincing them that he was the devil. At all events, after he had worked his racket on them for some time they believed him to be the evil one, whether he was or not.

And they were on the point of chucking him overboard, or otherwise maltreating him, when the officers of the *Hannibal* interfered, and drove them back again to their quarters on the fore-castle.

Then they began to sing hymns, which they felt sure would down "The Old Boy," but after singing awhile they became so excited that the captain of the steamboat decided to wet them down, after which they subsided and dodged for cover.

But not long afterwards the landing of Chippendale was made, where the colored colonists were to get off, and they were not slow to do so.

But Bob felt lonesome the moment they had gone. From first to last he had enjoyed a barrelful of fun with them, and now he did not know what he should get as a substitute for them.

He stood on the after upper deck as they landed, and never were coons so unmercifully guyed as he and Joe Duso guyed them, while the other passengers laughed at the performance.

New Orleans was quite a long distance away yet, and considerable time had to be killed before arriving there. But Bob managed to put in a portion of it very profitably, for he found a big New Orleans merchant on board, to whom he sold a large bill of goods.

And he found the old fellow to be one of earth's jolly ones. He had a state-room furnished with everything that could make the heart glad, and it was a sort of head-quarters for his boon companions, several of whom were on board.

But Bob caught on with them, as he usually did with people, and both he and Joe Duso were not long in finding friendly recognition.

And they played cards and did other things to make the time pass pleasantly. They talked over the affair with the negroes on the fore-castle, and had many a laugh over it.

"Give us a specimen of your art," suggested Mr. Delmaine, the merchant aforesaid.

"Well, I think he has given us several samples already," replied one of the party.

"I acknowledge that," replied Mr. Delmaine, "but I meant a private specimen."

"Gentlemen, this is rather close quarters for a ventriloquist to perform in, as they usually require to be a yard or two from their auditors, but I will do the best I can to amuse you," replied Bob, cheerfully.

"Well, we can move around so as to give you more room," replied another.

This being agreed to, they began to crowd into the far corner of the state-room, but as there were not seats enough for all, one of the guests took a large valise from a bunk, and turning it on end, proceeded to sit upon it.

But as he did so there issued from it, to all appearance, a succession of squeals, as though a pig had been sat upon.

The man leaped about two feet into the atmosphere, knocking the table over, and creating the wildest excitement.

"Holy Moses! I didn't know you had a pig in that valise, Delmaine," said he, as he recovered his balance and looked wildly around.

"Neither have I that I was aware of," said the astonished merchant.

"But there surely is."

"Then I must have got a valise belonging to somebody else. Let's see," and he took a key from his vest pocket, after placing the valise upon the righted table.

They all gathered anxiously around, for as yet not one of them had tumbled to Bob's racket.

Thrusting the key into the lock, he opened it without the slightest trouble.

But of course there was no pig there, and nothing else that was remarkable.

That astonished company looked at each other with amazement. What did it mean?

Finally Joe Duso began to laugh, for he was the first to fall, and then they all saw it.

Bob Rollick had given them a specimen of his ventriloquial power before they were expecting it, and then how they did laugh! How they shook Bob by the hand and congratulated him.

"The best thing I ever saw," said Mr. Delmaine.

"But how like the mischief you frightened me, for I was dead sure that I had sat down on somebody's pig," said the man.

"Well, that is wonderful," said another.

"How the deuce do you do it?"

"Oh, by a twist of the wrist," replied Bob, smiling.

"Well, I should say so."

But after the excitement was over, and they all took their seats again, Bob proceeded to give them some of his fine work, with the assistance of Mr. Delmaine's open valise, which stood on the table.

"Gentlemen, I fear Mr. Delmaine has something concealed in his gripsack a trifle out of the run of things usually carried in such receptacles," said he, and then he rapped upon the side of it.

"What der yer want?" came in smothered accents from the interior, seemingly.

"Who and what are you?" asked Bob, suiting the expression of his face to the situation.

"None av yer business."

"Oh, come now, don't be impudent; who are you?"

"Moike, ther dwarf."

"And who is Mike, the dwarf?"

"O'm Irish."

"Well, I suspected from the first that you were not a Frenchman or a Russian. But what are you doing in here?"

"O'm Mr. Delmaine's pet."

"Oh, you are, eh?"

"O'i am."

"And does he usually carry you in this valise?"

"He do."

"Well, how do you like to travel in a valise?"

"Foine. O'i manage to kape warum."

"Yes, I should say you might. But won't you come out, and show yourself?"

"O'i will not."

"Well, was it you that made the noise of a pig just now when somebody attempted to use your berth for a stool?"

"It was, bad manners ter him," came the indignant but smothered reply, which produced a genuine laugh.

"Did he tip you up?"

"He stood me on me head, bad luck ter him," said he, producing another laugh.

"Well, but hadn't you better reconsider your determination not to show yourself?"

"What'er yer chavin' dictionary for?"

"Well, never mind my dictionary; will you allow me to open the valise, and introduce you to the gentlemen present?"

"O'i will not!"

"Why not?"

"O'm private property."

"I don't believe it, and am going to open the valise," said he, firmly, turning the key.

"Don't ye do it."

"Yes, I shall."

"Where's Mr. Delmaine?"

"He is here."

"Tell him ter shoot yer."

"Oh, no! Come now, come out," said Bob, opening the valise a trifle.

As he did this, to the unbounded astonishment of all present, the voice of the supposed dwarf became proportionately louder; in fact, just exactly as it would have sounded had there really been a person inside.

"Lave me be! Shut it up!"

"You shut up!" replied Bob, throwing the valise wide open upon the table, and bowing to those astonished gentlemen.

Involuntarily they all arose and looked into the innocent valise, and then they began to applaud the youthful ventriloquist.

It was indeed a clever performance, but not so good as it would have been had the room been larger and the auditors further removed from the performer.

But few, if any, of them had ever seen anything more clever anywhere, and now they could readily understand how he had so completely fooled the negroes about the man in the anchor chain box, and made them believe that he had a talking monkey.

"If I were you, Mr. Rollick, I would go upon the stage and give up drumming," said Mr. Delmaine.

"Oh, I like drumming better, sir," replied Bob.

"You do?" asked sever.

"Yes, indeed. I not only do business that makes me as much money as the show business would, but I have even more fun than I should have if I went traveling around as a showman."

"Well, I guess that is so," said Mr. Delmaine, "and I respect you for it. You will be a merchant some day, than which there is no more honorable calling."

"Yes, sir. My adopted mother is going to buy me an interest in the house I now represent, just as soon as I have finished this trip."

"Good! I congratulate you. But you must have had heaps of fun while traveling?"

"Indeed, you may well say so," and thereupon Bob related several of his adventures, keeping the company in a roar of laughter for an hour or two.

"Good enough!" said Mr. Delmaine, after the stories had been finished; "but now will you promise me one thing?"

"I dare say; what is it?"

"That you will give a private entertainment at my house in New Orleans, to which I will invite a few particular friends."

"Certainly, sir, with pleasure, only I would not like to have it get into the papers, for, as you know, I am a professional Yankee notion drummer, and not a professional ventriloquist."

"Exactly, and be assured, young man, that not a word shall get into print regarding it," said the old merchant, shaking him cordially by the hand. "Ah! there is the dinner-gong. Will you do me the honor of dining with me?"

"Thank you, I will."

"Good. I have a private table in the saloon," said he, going from his state-room, followed by the others.

It was evident that Mr. Delmaine was a man of wealth and influence. The private table which had been prepared for him was loaded down with a most rich and elaborate dinner, and a colored waiter and carver was specially assigned him.

He occupied the head of the table, of course, and Bob was seated at the foot of it, while the other guests took places at the sides.

Right in front of where Bob sat was a beautiful roast pig on a platter, and ornamented with all sorts of floral designs, made of vegetables, by the artistic waiter, who was evidently very proud of what he could do in the way of garnishing tables and dishes.

After the soup and fish had been served and the claret poured out, Dolph, the waiter, went for that roast pig with a flourish and a carving-knife and fork.

Yes, he was an airy and artistically flourishing darkey, and after executing one of his flourishes, he thrust his fork into the pig, preparatory to carving it up in an artistic manner, when that finely-roasted porker uttered a squeal as though alive.

That flourishing and artistic darkey dropped his knife and fork and started back in alarm.

The party, who by this time understood that Bob Rollick was the author of that squeal, also looked duly astonished.

But the way that waiter's eyes rolled as he glanced gaspingly from one to another was so highly ludicrous that they could scarcely keep from laughing.

"What is the matter, Dolph?" asked Mr. Delmaine.

"Sah, I—I—" he stuttered.

"What ails you—are you crazy?"

"I—I—"

"Why don't you carve the pig?"

"Well, sah, I dunno, but—"

"Oh, proceed!"

With evident reluctance the darkey again took up his carving-knife and fork.

Cautiously he thrust it into the baked meat, and, as before, there again issued a squeal. But this time he did not drop his tools; he only started back and looked bewildered.

"I don't comprehend dis yer," said he, finally, and then, unable to hold in any longer, the whole party broke out into a loud laugh, which attracted the attention of the whole dining-cabin.

"Never mind—go on with your work," said Mr. Delmaine, and of course Bob tumbled and worked the racket no more just then.

The waiter knew, however, from the laughter that a joke of some kind had been played upon him, and the other diners round about knew also that they were having fun at Mr. Delmaine's table.

Dolph was disgusted and somewhat broken up as he proceeded to carve that pig and serve it out to those around the table. The airs and flourishes were all taken out of him, and he felt certain that Mr. Delmaine would not "stake" him on this occasion as he usually did, and it was a matter of great importance to him whether he received two dollars or nothing for his work, and no wonder he felt broken up.

However, the elegant dinner was served very well indeed, and no further trouble was experienced by the humbugged waiter.

During the evening there was music and dancing on the after-deck, which Bob and Joe Duso took a lively interest in, both being elegant dancers and capital entertainers for the ladies. Indeed, the evening passed most enjoyably.

But as Bob was going to his state-room he was approached by an elegantly-dressed dandy darkey, whom he instantly recognized as Dolph, the waiter, whom he had fooled at the dinner-table.

"I begs pardon, sah, but how war dat?" he asked, respectfully.

"What?" asked Bob, innocently.

"Dat pig."

"Oh, it was very nice," he replied, tipping him a half dollar, as that was what he was after.

Colored gemmen never refuse anything in that line, although that was not what he was after. So he took it of course.

"I begs pardon, sah, but—"

"But what? Haven't I given you enough?" asked Bob, with a show of indignation.

"Lord bless you, sah, yes, but dat amn't what I wants," said he, hesitatingly.

"Oh, it isn't, eh? All right; give it back to me, then."

"Wal, I won't offen' you by not takin' it—"

"No offense in the world."

see a waiter cutting up such pranks as you did while attempting to cut a roasted pig?"

"But I tole you, sah, dat I heah dat pig squeal," persisted Dolph.

"There, there, that will do. Good-night. Take my advice and stop drinking what gentlemen leave on the dinner table. It contains the worm of destruction, and presently, instead of fancying that you hear a pig squeal, you will imagine that you hear a horse laugh," said Bob.

Saying this he turned and left that poor bewildered darkey gazing after him.

Bob entered his state-room to attend to his long neglected *Muldoon*, and Dolph finally turned slowly away.

"Fo' de Lord, dat yer beats all I eber hear tell ob,"

and Bob, being apprised of it, at once set himself to work to prepare for it.

CHAPTER XXIX.

We left Bob Rollick at New Orleans, where he had done a first-rate business, and he was about to give a private entertainment at the house of Mr. Delmaine, the merchant prince, whom he had met and entertained on the boat, and also sold him a bill of goods.

The entertainment in the merchant's state-room will be remembered, as will Bob's other rackets on board the *Hannibal*, on the way from St. Louis to New Orleans.

Indeed he became famous on board before reaching



"Keep back, or down goes the steamer," said Bob, now understanding that they regarded him as the Evil One, and of course knowing that they would believe him capable of doing anything miraculous.

"But what I wanted to ax you 'bout war dat pig. Did you heah him squeal when I stuck de fork inter him?"

"A roast pig squeal!" exclaimed Bob.

"Wal, sah, it sounded like if he did."

"Oh, come, what are you giving me?"

"I sartin heah him squeal twice, sah."

"You did?"

"Yes, sah, when I drop de knife an' fork."

"I say, Dolph, what brand do you guzzle?" asked Bob, after looking at him a moment, curiously.

"Sah, I neber drinks nuffin but what's left at de private table which I wait on."

"Well, how much do they generally leave?"

"Mighty little sometimes, sah," said he, with a half saddened grin.

"Oh, I don't suppose you will own it, but I suspect that you drnk too much."

"Can't be possible, sah."

"And that it is affecting your brain."

"Oh, sah!"

"Stop it, Dolph, stop it ere it is too late, my dear fellow sinner of the brunette type," said Bob, looking at him with much seriousness.

This almost paralyzed the darkey. He staggered back and took a look at Bob, with wide-open eyes.

"Think of it! Fancying that a roasted pig squealed!" and he laughed heartily. "I tell you as a friend that you must stop it."

"But, sah—"

"Or it will drag you down to the social plane of an ordinary darkey. Think of that!" said Bob, with great impressiveness.

"But warn't dar any joke 'bout it?" asked Dolph.

"Joke! A joke in such a thing?" exclaimed Bob, again withering him with a look.

"But what made de gemmen laugh so?"

"Laugh! Why should they not laugh when they

he mused, as he walked away. "Mus' be dat I can't stan' no wine nohow. Guess it am too delicate fo' my stomach, or my stomach am too delicate fo' de wine. Guess I'd better swar off de habit ob drinkin' altogedder and sell de wine dat's left at table to some udder aristocratic nigger. But it beats de bush, for I'd swar on a pile ob bibles fo' feet high dat I heah dat pig squeal when I stuck a fork in him," and, shaking his head dubiously, he walked away to his quarters in the fore-castle.

This really rounded up the voyage, for soon afterwards Bob retired for the night, and the next morning woke up in New Orleans, the boss city of the South.

Yes, here he was, three thousand miles from home, in a city he had heard and read much about, but scarcely hoped to see. He was not long in learning that he was in an un-American city, for a stranger would as soon suspect that he was somewhere in France as in the United States, so unlike is it; the language spoken in most instances being French or Spanish, although the "United States language" is of course spoken wherever there is an occasion for it, but people there appear to think little of it.

Taking a coach, he was driven to the St. Charles Hotel, where he intended to make his head-quarters during his stay there; and after he had arranged everything, he started out to see what he could find in the way of business.

He expected to do a large amount of it, for country merchants for hundreds of miles around went there for their supplies.

And in this he was not disappointed, for in less than a week he sent home to New York orders for several thousand dollars' worth of goods, which he had sold from sample.

But in the meantime Mr. Delmaine had arranged for a private seance at his highly aristocratic mansion;

his destination. The colored folks all believed him to be in league with the devil and the white passengers believed him to be a smart fellow.

Mr. Delmaine lived in very aristocratic style, and had an interesting family and a large circle of friends and acquaintances, some twenty-five or thirty of whom had received invitations to witness the entertainment which Bob had promised to give.

A nice little stage had been erected at one end of the magnificent parlor. The room was full of luxuriant plants and flowers, while all that was rich and unique seemed gathered there with brave men and beautiful women to do honor to the occasion.

To tell the truth, Bob felt a trifle shaky at finding himself in such a place, and almost wished that he had not promised to entertain them. It was more of a task than he had ever undertaken in that line before, and he felt that much more would be expected of him than he was capable of.

But he had one thing that never deserted him—his cheek, and on this he relied as usual.

Of course you know he had several sleight-of-hand tricks, which he performed very nicely, tricks which he had studied out from the book entitled "How to do Tricks," price ten cents, published by Frank Tousey, 34 and 36 North Moore street, New York, and he finally made up his mind to swing loose and go in for all he could do.

Mr. Delmaine's daughter, a beautiful girl about sixteen years of age, presided at the piano, and rendered him great assistance all through his performance.

But when he was all ready, and the hum of expectation was running high, he came forward upon the stage, bringing *Muldoon* with him, and was received by a hearty round of applause.

Muldoon was dressed in his best, his evening costume, claw-hammer coat and low-cut vest, and he looked very much like a dandy. Bob placed him on

the table, and as the applause died away he approached the front of the stage.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began, "I feel not a little nervous at finding myself in the presence of so large and so brilliant an audience, for, as you are probably aware, I am not a professional, and have never ventured to do more than amuse a few friends or have a little fun on my own account."

"He's givin' yeas taffy!" they all thought they heard the monkey say, and of course there was a laugh.

Bob, turned almost savagely upon Muldoon, who stood upon a little table.

"What do you mean, sir? How dare you speak in that manner, sir? Remain quiet," said he.

"Oh'm mum."

"Well see that you keep so."

get a chance; but really it is not exactly the thing to work it on a young man who is not in the professional business. What! Why, how is this? Worse and worse!" he exclaimed, pulling a kitten from the hat.

Of course they all laughed as he placed the kitten on the table—a real live kitten.

"Really, ladies and gentlemen, this is not exactly right! Were I a professional, it would be different. But you certainly will agree with me that this is a trifle too much to— Ah! what is this?" he asked, looking intently into the hat. "Well, of course you will understand that this is a joke," and here he laughed so heartily that the audience caught it and responded.

"More taffy!" whooped Muldoon, and this produced still another laugh on top of the first.

and the owner of the hat blushed more deeply than ever.

Indeed they all went for him in the wildest manner, and a sicker man than he was can scarcely be conceived of.

In fact, he verily wished that he had never been born, such a modest man was he.

"Really I don't see how I can go on with such a loaded hat as this. Why didn't you say at first, sir, that you carried your grub and wardrobe in your hat? I don't understand why you should wish to make this exhibition in the presence of your friends. But, perhaps, you and they regard it as very funny."

It did seem as though they regarded it as funny by the way they laughed; but, oh! how the owner of that hat did blush!



"Please be quiet, sir! Take off your hat and bow to the ladies and gentlemen before you." "Hello, folks!" the little rascal seemed to say, for Bob took occasion to speak for him just as he removed his hat.

"All roight!"

"But, as I was about to say, I will endeavor to amuse you, and shall trust to your generosity if I fail to do all that you may expect of me."

"They'll tumble," said Muldoon.

"What do you mean by that, sir?" asked Bob, turning to him.

"They'll find you out."

"Oh, shut up! Speak when you are spoken to."

"All roight!"

"As I was saying, I shall fall back on your generosity, trusting that you will overlook any little weakness which you may detect. I am only an amateur, remember; and as a starter I will ask some one of the gentlemen present to lend me a plug hat, or perhaps I should say a tall hat," he added, going down into the audience.

Somebody in the audience handed him a tall silk hat, and he took it back on the stage with him.

"I beg pardon," said he, looking at the audience in an innocent sort of way; "but the gentleman to whom this hat belongs should not try to embarrass an amateur," said he, looking at his auditors.

There seemed to be a hitch, and those of the audience who took particular interest in the performance looked at each other, and wondered what was coming next.

"Really, I do not understand why a job should be put up on me. I intended to give you a nice little exhibition—that is, the best I could give—but I find that I am handicapped at the very start. What does this mean?" he asked, producing a head of cabbage from the hat, and holding it up before the astonished company.

Of course there was a laugh, but Bob stood looking at them as though he was the victim of a joke.

"It is all very well to work this thing whenever you

"Shut up, sir? Don't you see what I have produced from the hat?"

"It's a picnic!"

"I should say so. What is this? I say, Mr. Dinksbury, did you intend to put up a job on me that would break up this little quiet entertainment? I certainly think you must have had that in your mind, or else why did you load your hat down in this way?" and here he brought out a half-grown chicken, a young rooster, who jumped up and crowed the moment he found himself at liberty.

Of course this produced another laugh, and it was long-continued, for Bob looked for all the world like a person who had been imposed upon by some outside joker. Indeed, many of the audience took it for granted that there was a joke somewhere, intended for the performer, and it made them laugh all the more.

"It would be all very well to play such a trick on an old performer, but I am disposed to let it pass."

Here he turned to go towards the table as if to go on with his performance, when he stopped suddenly, and again looked anxiously into the hat, after which he turned again to his audience.

"Well, I guess, come to think of it, that I will not use this hat. The gentleman evidently made a mistake when he lent it to me, didn't you, sir?" he asked, addressing him directly.

"No, I guess not," replied the man, blushing, and all hands staring at him.

"And are you perfectly willing that I shall remove the remaining contents?"

"Oh, yes."

"All right; since I have your permission I will see what else you have here," saying which he proceeded to take from the hat a nicely-folded night-cap, and as he exposed it to the company, a great laugh went up,

"Oh, I am certain that this job has been put up on me, but I think I can stand it. Now, how is this?" he asked, taking a pack of cards from the hat.

This convulsed the audience; for the owner of that hat was known to be a very quiet old bachelor, averse to gambling and all other fashionable extravagances.

The more he blushed the more his friends laughed, and he was really to be pitied.

"Well, of course, these had to be kept out of sight; but why didn't you put them in your coat-pocket instead of in your hat? Or, if you thought the hat the better place, why did you hand it to me to perform a trick with?"

"That's all right," the owner of the hat managed to say, after a fashion.

"Oh, it is, eh? Well, I don't think so. My modesty will not allow me to investigate this business any further, so I will return you the hat, and with your permission substitute a few tricks with your pack of cards instead of the original trick I intended," saying which he handed back the hat.

Everybody sitting anywhere near the poor, blushing victim rose up to get a look into the hat, out of which such a quantity of stuff had been taken, evidently expecting that something must be left.

Meanwhile Bob Rollick was manipulating the pack of cards, doing some very pretty sleight-of-hand work as he talked away.

"Yes, ladies and gentlemen, I shall be obliged to abandon the trick I intended to show you with the hat; and yet, that you may not be disappointed, I will call out a few old card snaps."

With this he shuffled the cards, and then proceeded to perform several different tricks, which greatly amused the company, and so nicely were they done that those looking on forgot all about the hat, or if they remembered it at all, they believed all the more

earnestly that those things had been found in it, and that the card tricks were simply a snap coming out of the find therein.

These card tricks were very ingenious, and attracted much attention and applause; but as they are hard to describe, I will not attempt to do so. Suffice it to say, however, that they made a hit, and two or three of the colored servants who stood around to wait on people became fully convinced that Bob was in league with the devil.

But, although his card tricks were very nearly original in all respects and were highly appreciated, yet there could be no doubt at that the majority of the company there gathered were more anxious to witness the feats of ventriloquism than anything else.

Bob knew this, although he had caught on to a big laugh with his tricks, and so, after doing a few more, he turned to Muldoon.

Taking him by the hand, he assisted him to jump from the table, and then led him down to the front of the stage.

"Ladies and gentlemen: I have more or less pleasure in introducing to you a somewhat shrunken individual by the name of Muldoon. I gave him that name on account of his remarkable facial resemblance to a celebrated alderman of Chicago, who is one of the original owners of the cognomen. You may possibly think my little friend here is a monkey—"

"Oh, come off!" the animal seemed to say, at which Bob started in a very natural way, and looked at Muldoon in surprise.

"Please be quiet, sir! Take off your hat and bow to the ladies and gentlemen before you."

"Hello, folks!" the little rascal seemed to say, for Bob took occasion to speak for him just as he removed his hat.

Of course there was a laugh at this, although Muldoon was as innocent as a lamb.

"That is not a very respectful way to address an audience, sir. Return to the table."

Muldoon was well trained, and of course understood nearly everything that Bob said to him. Therefore, he obeyed with alacrity, jumping up on the table and again bowing.

The sight of that tail of his, streaming out from between the tails of his claw-hammer coat, set the company to laughing vociferously, and no wonder at it.

"Well, Mr. Muldoon, how are you feeling this evening?" asked Bob.

"Bang up," replied Muldoon.

"Bang up! Do you mean a bang?"

"No, I ain't that kind of a cat."

"I thought not; you don't look like it. But why do you make use of such slang?"

"O'm a tough."

"Ah! but I don't like to hear you say that, for I have just introduced you as a gentleman."

"O! take it all back," said he, quickly.

"What do you take back?"

"Me introduction."

"But how can you do that?"

"O! I'll change me name, so o! will."

"Very well; take any name you like; but will you favor us with a song?" asked Bob, placing Muldoon's toy fiddle in his hands.

Monkey like, he instantly began scraping away at the dumb instrument, while Bob did the singing—

"Down by the Garden Gate"—very creditably, the performance being received with the wildest demonstrations of delight and redemanded.

"Very good indeed, Muldoon," said Bob, after bowing before the earnest plaudits.

"O! won't be fed."

"Fed! what with?"

"Taff, o! don't chew."

"Really, I was not giving you taffy."

"Ye wour not."

"But you just said I was."

"O! said ye wanted to, but o! wouldn't have it," replied the sober-looking monkey.

"But didn't you hear the applause?"

"That's hand taffy, so it is."

"Well, I guess you like it. Now, suppose you give us a little dance," said Bob, placing a little tambourine in his hand, and which he knew very well how to use.

"O! can't dance."

"Why, yes you can. I have seen you dance many a time, and oft. Now show the ladies and gentlemen how you can work up a little of the light fantastic," said Bob, coaxingly.

"O! can't, oim tellin' yer."

"Why not?"

"O! have a corn on me toe."

"Oh, never mind the corn. Go on and give us your idea of the poetry of motion."

"Fut'll yer have?"

"Well, give us a jig?"

"O! havn't me brogues."

"Well, never mind. Make your own time on the tambourine, and go through the motions, for I dare say it will be just as well appreciated."

Bob took good care, while carrying on this supposed dialogue with his monkey, not to let go of his hold upon the tambourine, for if he had Muldoon would instantly have begun to thump it and to dance.

But as he finished, Bob let go of the little instrument, and Muldoon began at once to dance around the top of the table, all the while thumping the tambourine and acting in a most grotesque and comical manner.

At all events, he was so good, or so very bad, that he made the company laugh heartily, and that, of course, was all Bob wanted.

"There, that will do; much obliged," said he, taking the tambourine from him.

And then he handed him a little musket and put him through the manual of arms. Really, that was

the best thing that the monkey did, and the performance, ending with firing the musket, elicited much applause.

"Look at his nibs over there!" he suddenly exclaimed.

"What do you mean? Whom do you mean?"

"Ther ould bald-headed chap there."

"Who? What is he doing?"

"He has his arm around a girl's waist!"

This caused everybody to turn and look, when, sure enough, one of the guests did have his arm around the waist of a young lady who sat next to him.

It was, of course, all innocent enough, but the parties blushed and uncoupled so suddenly that they gave themselves dead away and raised a laugh at their expense that shook the house.

"Be quiet, sir!" cried Bob, just as soon as he could be heard.

But this only increased the laughter.

"How dare you call attention to such things, sir? You should be ashamed of yourself."

"Luck at him blush!"

"I'll make you blush, you scoundrel!" and in the midst of the hilarity, Bob seized the monkey, just as though he was highly indignant at his behavior, and carried him from the room.

Placing him in his cage, he returned to the platform when the laughter had partially died out, and, bowing politely was received with a perfect storm of applause.

Indeed, he well deserved it, for a prettier ventriloquial entertainment was never seen anywhere, and the company declared they had never seen it equaled by a professional.

Then Bob thought he would give them a little touch further of his sleight-of-hand and finish the entertainment.

In order to do this, he called one of the colored servants to the platform to assist him. He was a spruce-looking darkey, but somewhat reluctant about going where he might get too close to Bob, whom he believed to be a demon of darkness. In fact, he would not have gone had not his master ordered him to do so.

Bob treated him very nicely at first until he got his confidence, and then he went for him. Taking the pack of cards which he had seemingly found in the hat, he proceeded to do several mystifying tricks, making the coon assist until the poor fellow got so wild and confused that he hardly knew what he was about.

Indeed, after making a card disappear, while he held a dish over it, was too much for him, and he broke and ran from the room.

"This, ladies and gentlemen, is all I have by way of entertainment this evening. I am sorry it is no better, but you can't expect much of a Yankee Notions drummer who has limited opportunities for practice. Thanking you again for your kind attention, I remain yours truly, Bob Rollick," he added, bowing handsomely and retiring from the stage.

Every person present seemed to vie with the other to see which should spank their hands together the hardest in honor of the amateur ventriloquist and magician.

But the scene soon changed, and the host, who had taken such a fancy to Bob, led him out into the parlor, and gave him a personal introduction to his guests, as well as to his own family.

This brought him into contact with beautiful Miss Adele Delmaine, who had played for him so nicely during the performance, and for the first time in his life Bob Rollick was mashed.

Indeed, it was a mash on both sides, for anybody could see at a glance that she was in love with the handsome young drummer as deeply as he was with her.

A dance followed the entertainment, all of which Bob put in with the rich merchant's charming daughter, and a fine supper followed this. In fact, it was past one o'clock when Bob assisted Muldoon into the merchant's carriage, and waving his hand back at the lovely girl, was driven in the direction of the St. Charles Hotel.

CHAPTER XXX.

ALTOGETHER Bob had an elegant time in New Orleans, doing not only a large amount of business, but having all the fun he wanted besides.

But just before he was ready to leave the city, he received instructions from Slope, Slimmer & Co., to return to New York by steamer, stopping at Savannah, Georgia, Charleston, S. C., and Richmond, Va., before finishing up his trip finally.

He never hated to leave a place so much as he did New Orleans; but it was probably more on account of the rich merchant's lovely daughter, Adele Delmaine, than anything else.

They met two or three times after that entertainment which he gave at her father's house, an account of which was given in the preceding chapter, although Bob could not, with all the cheek he possessed, muster enough of it to tell the girl that he was clean gone on her, although she was evidently waiting to hear him say so.

But just before he took the steamer for New York, he managed to get up spunk enough to ask her if he might write to her after he got home, just to let her know that he had arrived in safety, and she of course said yes; that she would be very much delighted to hear of his safe arrival, although she fibbed like a real naughty girl, for she didn't want him to go back home at all.

Slightly in the dumps, he sailed away towards home, leaving his heart behind him; and as it was the first time in his life that he had ever done so, he wasn't Bob Rollick at all.

During the first day out he moped around the decks without any particular aim or object. He was mashed, clean gone, for the first time in his life.

The sensation was of course new to him, and he brooded over it.

The idea of rollicking Bob Rollick being in love with a girl!

Whew! It will not of course seem possible to those who have known him so long; to those who knew him when he was simply a boot-black in New York, without a hope or a prospect beyond his lowly calling, but time works wonders.

He was on board the steamer *Gulf Stream*, bound from New Orleans to New York, stopping at Savannah and other ports along the Atlantic coast, and although he did not at first take notice of his fellow-passengers, he finally, after the first day out, began to take stock.

There were some very aristocratic people on board, as well as several of a lower grade. In fact, there were all sorts there, as there usually is on board of all such conveyances.

Bob took them all in, but it was not until he had conversed with a few of the many characters which he found that he seemed to come to himself and to feel like a little fun.

There was one old fellow among the passengers that attracted his special notice. He seemed to be a meddlesome missionary, or something of the kind, and his chief occupation appeared to be to bore the people and to buzz them into his way of thinking.

Everybody seemed to be down on him before they had been out a day, for he was all the while snatching somebody by the button-hole and asking them about their soul's condition.

The second day out he tackled Bob. He had observed that the young drummer was not wholly at ease, and suspected that it was because he was afraid something might happen to the steamer and he be lost.

"My dear young friend, you appear to be despondent," said he, in a sing-song voice.

"No; do I, though?" asked Bob, looking up at him most innocently.

"Yes. I fear that you have not made your peace with Heaven."

"Oh, you think that's what's the matter with me, do you?"

"You look like one that is cast down by the weight of sin. Allow me to—"

"Nix, old fell, you don't catch on," said Bob, giving him a comical wink.

"Catch on! What do you mean?" asked the colporteur, looking at him in amazement.

"You haven't hit it, old man."

"I don't understand you, young man."

"You're off the scent."

"Please explain," said the man, open-eyed.

"You're no good."

"How?"

"As a guesser, you're away off," said Bob, and by that time about fifty of the passengers had gathered around.

"Am I not right?"

"Dead wrong, old man," said he, shaking his head, discouragingly.

"And you have made your peace with Heaven?"

"Cert! Got an accident-policy right here in my pocket," said he, earnestly, and the passengers began to laugh.

"Well, if I am not right in supposing that your heart was ill at ease, what, may I ask, is the cause?"

"And you won't give it away?"

"I hardly comprehend your meaning."

"Well, you won't drop it around?"

"Won't do what?" asked the colporteur, gazing at him in blank amazement.

"You won't chirp it to the boys?"

"Well, really, I—I don't understand you."

"You won't give me the grand guy and start the gang snickering at me, eh?"

"What do you mean, sir?"

"What? You don't catch on?"

"You are bandying words with me, sir."

"No, sir, I have no bandage about me. What I want to know is, are you leaky?"

"Sir, you are becoming impertinent," said the gospel sharp, turning away, for he began to tumble that he had picked up a tough.

"Not at all, my dear sir. You asked me a question, and all I wished to know was, whether you would tell anybody, provided I confessed what it was that bowed me down."

"Well?"

"It is too tender and sacred to be given away promiscuously."

"What is?"

"My secret."

"Very well, I will not mention it," said the man, slightly annoyed, but still hoping to make a point, since all around were laughing at him.

"I am in love!" said Bob, in a stage whisper.

The colporteur started back as though Bob had hit him one on the nose.

"Fact! Sh! Got 'em bad!"

"Young man, you are a trifier," said he, turning to walk away, while the crowd sent up a hearty laugh.

"I am not a person to be insulted, sir."

"Neither am I, and if any other sucker comes around prying into our business, we'll just chip in together and knock the whole nose off him; eh, old man?"

This worked the business up to a climax, and the crowd, who had been grinning and snickering until now, broke forth in a loud whoop at the meddlesome, pious man's expense, which attracted the attention of everybody on board.

That P. M. got out. He vanished. He made himself somewhat scarce; he shriveled up and took a "header," so to speak; in other words, he made a

carom for his state-room door, and pocketed himself.

As usual Bob had made a hit, and from that time forward he became a general favorite with all on board, while the P. M. was a laughing stock and knew enough to keep out of sight for several days thereafter.

Bob, as before stated, became a favorite, and whenever there was a card party or a social set to pass a convivial hour, Bob was the central figure, and kept his end up, you want to bet.

Of course he had heaps of fun with Muldoon, and his ventriloquism, and the many stories he could tell, out as it would be only repeating what we have already seen and enjoyed, why, I don't think it best to give the scenes.

But on the fourth day out, and while nearly in the middle of the Gulf of Mexico, there came up one of

casting his eyes heavenward, and with a most heaven-forsaken look.

"Oh, no; that is not my parental name," replied Bob, smiling calmly. "My name's Bob Rollick, Yankee notion drummer."

"Ah! the levity will be taken out of you before long—depend upon that," said he, turning sadly away.

Well, it was not long before the storm of wind, thunder and lightning was upon them. It was not such a terrible affair; no harder, and possibly not so hard, as the officers and crew had often experienced, although they knew their business well enough to take every precaution, and it was this that made many of the passengers nervous.

Indeed, it blew great guns. Every stitch of canvas was securely housed, and the steamer's head put to the wind, which whistled and screamed wildly through

"Say, will you shut up?" asked another. "You are frightening all the other fools."

"Oh, the judgment of Heaven is upon us, and we shall all go down!"

"Just speak for yourself, old man. I thought you'd plead guilty before long, even if you did only now proclaim yourself such a pious cuss. But you seem to be making all the fuss, and we suspect that you are a very bad man in disguise."

"Yes, he's a Jonah—no doubt about it."

"Throw him overboard, and let a shark play hide-and-go-seek with him," suggested Bob; and amid the laugh which this occasioned, the poor, frightened old donkey struggled to his feet.

"Yes, throw him overboard, and see if it won't call off the hurricane."

"Over goes the Jonah!"

"Yes, fire him!" and other expressions were heard



He was slightly taken aback, but when the head of the house took him aside, and told him that his adopted mother had lately paid fifty thousand dollars to buy him a fourth interest in the business, he began to understand it.

those terrible storms for which this latitude and this body of water is so famous.

The sky had shown a coffee-colored hue since early morning, and not a breath of air seemed to flutter upon the surface of the vasty deep. The barometer was alarmingly low, and the officers of the steamer, knowing the situation so well, had taken every precaution.

And so strongly defined were the evidences of coming atmospheric trouble that nearly everybody on board understood that something dreadful was impending.

Old travelers cast their eyes around the auspicious-looking horizon and out upon the unnaturally dark, lead-color of the water, and shook their heads ominously.

"There is something bad coming," they said.

The colporteur had himself taken alarm, but when he heard others talking he became panic-stricken and wanted to start a prayer-meeting.

"Fellow-sinners, the wrath of Heaven is about to fall upon us," said he, in a whining tone of voice. He was standing on the after-deck, and looked the very picture of despair.

"What makes you think so?" asked somebody.

"Oh, the barometer has shrunk away down into its bulb, and nothing but the mercy of Heaven can save us," said he.

"Well, let's do something pious," said another.

"What shall it be?"

"Pass around the contribution box," said Bob, and the ridiculousness of the thing caused a most uproarious laugh, which made the colporteur look sick.

"Young man, you are a child of iniquity!" said he,

the standing rigging. A heavy sea was soon raised, and the vessel pitched and labored heavily.

The passengers were many of them alarmed, and even Bob Rollick, who had such an experience before, began to feel a trifle shaky, although he could see well enough that there was no alarm or much anxiety among the officers, which of course convinced him that there really was no danger, however annoying and unpleasant it might be.

But you should have seen that frightened, pious rooster! He bellowed like a bull, alternately praying and whining—in fact, he was frightening timid people, and making himself a nuisance to everybody else.

Some of the passengers in the saloon yelled at him to shut up, dry up, cork up, fall on himself; but he wouldn't do it, and kept on moaning like a sick calf.

"He's a Jonah!" cried Bob.

"Yes; throw him overboard!" shouted somebody else; and several of them, hoping to frighten him into silence, for by this time he had half of the female passengers and nearly all the children bawling.

Bob went along with them, you bet, even if the vessel was pitching so that he could scarcely walk.

"Say, old man, what's the matter?" asked one of the indignant passengers, approaching him.

"Oh, we shall all go down if we don't pray," he whined. "Let us all humble ourselves—"

They never knew what he intended to say, in order to finish his speech; for a violent lurch of the steamer at that moment threw him over sprawling, and his head knocked a hole in—or, rather, it smashed into pie—a handbox containing somebody's love of a bonnet.

"Oh, he tumbles at last!" said Bob.

"Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord!" moaned the fallen man.

above the creaking of the steamer's joints as she labored, and the sobs of the frightened women and children.

"Oh, gentlemen!" he cried, falling upon his knees before them—for he believed they meant it—"please spare me, for I am a poor, miserable sinner, unprepared to die."

"Oh, ho! So you have been giving us a stand off, have you, pretending to be so pious?" said Bob.

"Yes, yes; I'm a poor, miserable sinner."

"Well, you won't be one long if you don't shut up that cowardly blubbering. Go to your state-room and don't let me hear another howl out of you, or I'll put you in irons down in the bilge," said the first mate, who at that moment happened to be passing through the cabin and took in the situation.

"I—I—is there any danger, captain?" asked the poor wretch, piteously.

"Yes, there is danger of your being ironed if you don't stop making a calf of yourself. What is the number of your room—89? Well, you just hop yourself into it lively. Git!"

"I—I can't walk, captain," he moaned.

"Well, I'll help you," and seizing the cowardly old fool by the arm, he rushed him out of sight amid general laughter.

That settled his nibs, and if he did any more squealing, he did it out of sight and hearing.

The blow lasted only a short time, and then the steamer was again put upon her course, and all was sunshine and pleasure again; although awfully frightened, the awfully good man was in no hurry to show up again.

The remainder of the voyage was all that the most particular could wish for. Bob had any quantity of

fun, and made a large number of friends before he landed at Savannah, but that old pious fraud kept entirely away from him, you bet.

Well, he parted with his friends at Savannah, Georgia, and went out to do business, calculating to go by rail to Charleston, S. C., and there take the next steamer to New York.

And he did it, taking big orders by the way, and arriving in New York very near the schedule time the firm had set down for him.

The reception they gave him was one of the finest, and entirely different from that accorded to the majority of drummers.

He was slightly taken aback, but when the head of the house took him aside, and told him that his adopted mother had lately paid fifty thousand dollars to buy him a fourth interest in the business, he began to understand it.

"The dear old girl, I love her more than ever," said he, and he did not mean because she had purchased him an interest in the house for which he had been drumming, but he saw she loved him as tenderly as a natural mother could, and it worked upon his better nature.

Without loss of time, after he had spent two or three hours with his firm, leaving Muldoon at the store in charge of the porter, he sought the dear old girl, his adopted mother, and she gave him as hot a reception as she possibly could have given a natural son.

How she caressed him, and asked him for the particulars of his long travel, and how he braced up to

her, and told the story of his doings and adventures since he had seen her last.

"Oh, don't forget that Bob was a daisy, and that he knew how to work his hash-chewer."

But at the same time, don't forget that he was very fond of Miss Gnarley, his adopted mother, for he was highly appreciative, and he knew that he was indebted to her for all he was, and for all he might hereafter be, to say nothing of her natural goodness of heart, which had been manifested on so many occasions.

"Robert," said she, "I have bought you an interest in your firm, and for the future you are to make your home here with me. Think of it, Robert, with me," said she, twining her arms around his neck.

"Nothing could please me better, mother," said he, returning her caresses, like a dutiful and loving son.

But at the same time he could not help thinking of his New Orleans Adele, with whom he was so deeply in love, and to contrast her with the noble but homely and skinny old maid whom he so much respected as an adopted mother.

Wealth and all that was lovely were now his, and a most brilliant future was open before him, but he could not help thinking how much nearer heaven it would be if Adele was substituted for Miss Gnarley.

But this is not a love story, so we will leave all that business outside to take care of itself, as such things usually do. It was a soft snap on both sides, and we will let the reader judge for himself how it eventuated.

But from that time Bob Rollock took his place in the big establishment as one of the firm, respected by his superiors and idolized by those beneath him.

But he was always and forever Bob Rollock, for he couldn't be anything else to save his life. He was the smartest and fastest member of the firm, and could do more business in one hour than either one of the partners could do all day long.

His particular department, however, was to take charge of the drummers out on the road, and having learned its business thoroughly himself he knew all about it.

But the reader may be assured of one thing—Bob never went back on his old companion, Muldoon. No, no; he wasn't that kind of a fellow, as you know full well.

On the contrary, he had a room fitted up for him, with everything that could make a monkey's heart glad, and thus he was fixed for life.

And right here we may as well stop our story of him.

You remember how you and Bob met; you remember him when he was a poor boot-black, and how a little bit of business on his part, fortunately executed, put him to the front. You went with him to school, and participated in all his fun; but now you take leave of him when he's away up.

Bob is a good fellow, isn't he?

Shake hands with him, and we will let fall the curtain on BOB ROLLOCK, THE YANKEE NOTION DRUMMER, and trust to meet again with some other jovial soul.

[THE END.]

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